

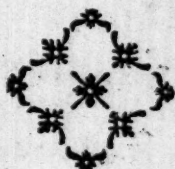
MORAL TALES,

B Y

M. MARMONTEL.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

THE SECOND EDITION.



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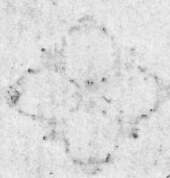
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MR. MARRIOTT

VOLUME THE SECOND

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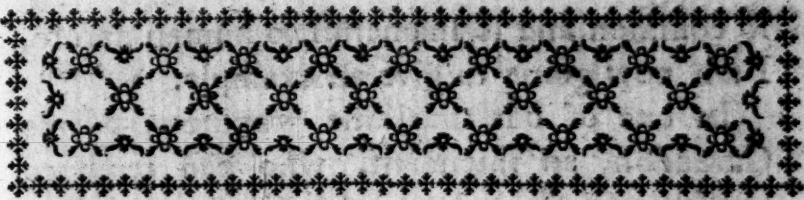
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MORAL TALES.



THE BAD MOTHER.

 AMONG the monstrous productions of nature, may be reckoned the heart of a mother who loves one of her children to the exclusion of all the rest. I do not mean an enlightened tenderness, which distinguishes, among the young plants which it cultivates, that which yields the best returns to its early care; I speak of a blind fondness, frequently exclusive, sometimes jealous, which creates an idol and victims amid the little innocents brought into the world, for each of whom we are equally bound to soften the burthen of life. Of this error,

VOL. II.

A

so

2 THE BAD MOTHER,

so common and so shamefull to human nature, I am now going to give an example.

In one of our maritime provinces, M. de Carandon, an intendant, who had rendered himself respectable by his severity in repressing grievances, making it a principle to favour the weak, and controul the strong, died poor, and almost insolvent. He had left behind him a daughter, whom nobody would marry, because she had much pride, little beauty, and no fortune. At last, a rich and honest merchant made his addresses to her, out of respect to the memory of her father. "He has done us so many good offices," said the worthy Corée, (this was the merchant's name) "it is but just that some of us should repay them to the daughter." With these thoughts Corée offered himself in an humble manner, and Mademoiselle Carandon, with a great deal of reluctance, consented to give him her hand, on condition that she should maintain an absolute authority in his house. The good man's respect for the memory of the father extended even to the daughter: he consulted her as his oracle; and if at any time he happened to differ in opinion from her, she had nothing to do but to utter these silencing expressions, "The late M. de Carandon, my father..." Corée never waited for her to conclude, before he confessed himself in the wrong.

He

A MORAL TALE. 3

He died rather young, and left her two children, of which she had condescended to permit him to be the father. On his death-bed he thought it his duty to regulate the partition of his effects; but M. de Carandon held it, as she told him, for a maxim, that in order to retain children under the dependance of a mother, it was necessary to render her the dispenser of their effects. This law was the rule of Corée's will; and his inheritance was left in the hands of his wife, with the fatal right of distributing it to her children as she should think proper. Of these two children the eldest was her delight; not that he was handsomer, or of a more happy disposition, than the younger, but because she had ran some danger of her life in bringing him into the world; he had first made her experience the pains and joy of child-bed; he had possessed himself of her tenderness, which he also seemed to have exhausted; she had, in short, all the bad reasons that a bad mother could have for loving only him.

Little Jemmy was the rejected child: his mother hardly vouchsafed to see him, and never spoke to him but to chide him. The poor child, intimidated, durst not look up before her, nor answer her without trembling. He

4 THE BAD MOTHER,

had, she said, his father's disposition, a vulgar soul, and the air of such kind of folks.

As to the eldest, whom she had taken care to render as headstrong, disobedient, and humourous as possible, he was gentility itself: his obstinacy was called greatness of spirit; his humours, excess of sensibility. She was delighted to see that he would never give up a point when he was in the right; and you must know that he was never in the wrong. She was eternally declaring that he knew his own good, and that he had the honour of resembling the sweet madam his mamma. This eldest boy, who was styled M. de l'Etang, (for it was not thought right to leave him the name of Corée) had masters of all sorts: the lessons they set were for him alone, but little Jemmy reaped the fruit of them; in so much, that at the end of a few years Jemmy knew all that they had taught M. de l'Etang, who knew nothing at all.

The good women, who make a practice of attributing to children all the little wit they have themselves, and who ruminate all morning on the pretty things they are to say in the day; had made the mother, whose weakness they were well acquainted with, believe that her eldest son was a prodigy. The masters, less complaisant, or less artfull, while they complained of the indocility and inattention
of

A MORAL TALE. 5

of this favourite, were boundless in their encomiums on Jemmy: they did not absolutely say that M. de l'Etang was a blockhead, but they said that little Jemmy had the genius of an angel. The mother's vanity was wounded; and out of an injustice, which one would not believe existed in nature, if this vice of mothers were less in fashion, she redoubled her aversion to the little wretch, became jealous of his improvement, and resolved to take away from her spoiled child the humiliation of a comparison.

A very affecting adventure awakened, however, in her the sentiments of nature; but this retort upon herself only humbled, without correcting her. Jemmy was ten years of age, M. de l'Etang near fifteen, when she fell dangerously ill. The eldest employed himself about his pleasures, and very little about his mother's health. It is the punishment of foolish mothers to love unnatural children. However, she began to grow uneasy; Jemmy perceived it, and his little heart was seized with grief and fear: the impatience to see his mother grew too strong for him to conceal. They had accustomed him never to appear but when he was called; but at last his tenderness gave him courage. He seized the instant when the chamber-door was half-open, entered silent and with trembling steps, and approach-

6 THE BAD MOTHER,

ed his mother's bed. "Is it you, my son?" said she.—"No, mamma, it is Jemmy." This natural and overwhelming answer penetrated with shame and grief the soul of this unjust woman; but a few caresses from her bad son soon restored him to his full ascendancy; and Jemmy, in the end, was neither the better beloved, nor reckoned the more worthy to be so.

Scarcely was Madam Corée recovered, when she resumed the design of banishing him her house: her pretense was, that M. de l'Etang, being naturally lively, was too susceptible of dissipation to have a companion in his studies; and the impertinent prepossessions of the masters for the child, who was the most humble and fawning with them, might easily discourage the other, whose spirit being higher, and less tractable, required more management: it was her pleasure, therefore, that l'Etang should be the only object of their cares, and she got rid of the unfortunate Jemmy by exiling him to a college.

At sixteen l'Etang quitted his masters in the mathematicks, physicks, musick, &c. just as he had taken them; he began his exercises, which he performed much in the same manner as he had done his studies; and at twenty he appeared in the world with the self-sufficiency of

of a coxcomb, who has heard of every thing, but reflected on nothing.

Jemmy, on his part, had gone through his studies; and his mother was quite wearied with the commendations they gave him. "Well then," said she, "since he is so wise, he will succeed in the church; he has nothing to do but to take to that course of life."

Unfortunately Jemmy had no inclination for the ecclesiastick state; he came therefore to entreat his mother to dispense with his entering into it. "You imagine then," said she to him with a cold and severe air, "that I have enough to maintain you in the world? I assure you I have not. Your father's fortune was not so considerable as was imagined; it will scarce be sufficient to settle your elder brother. For your part, you have only to consider whether you will run the career of benefices or of arms; whether you will have your head shaven or broken; in short, whether you will take a band or a lieutenancy of infantry: this is all that I can do for you." Jemmy answered her with respect, that there were less violent courses to be taken by the son of a merchant. At these words Mad. de Carandon was near dying with grief for having brought into the world a son so little worthy of her, and forbid him her sight. Young Corée,

8 THE BAD MOTHER,

distressed at having incurred his mother's anger, retired sighing, and resolved to try whether fortune would be less cruel to him than nature. He learnt that a vessel was on the point of sailing for the Antilles, whither he had a design of repairing. He writ to his mother to ask her consent, her blessing, and a parcel of goods. The two first articles were amply granted him, but the latter very sparingly.

His mother, too happy in being rid of him, wanted to see him before his departure, and, while she embraced him, bestowed on him a few tears. His brother also had the goodness to wish him a good voyage. These were the first caresses he had ever received from his relations; his sensible heart was penetrated with them: yet he durst not ask them to write to him; but he had a fellow-collegian, by whom he was tenderly beloved: and he conjured him at parting now and then to send him news of his mother.

She was now only employed in the care of settling her favourite son. He declared for the robe: they obtained him a dispensation from its studies; and he was soon admitted into the sanctuary of the laws. Nothing remained wanting but an advantageous marriage; they proposed a rich heiress; but they required of the widow the settlement of her fortune. She had the weakness to consent to it, scarce
reserving

reserving to herself sufficient to live decently; well assured that her son's fortune would be always at her disposal.

At the age of twenty-five, M. de l'Etang found himself a dapper little counsellour, neglecting his wife as much as his mother, taking great care of his own person, and paying very little regard to the bar. As it was genteel for a husband to have somebody besides his wife, l'Etang thought it his duty to set up for a man of intrigue. A young girl, whom he ogled at the play, returned his invitations, received him at her lodgings with a great deal of politeness, told him he was charming, which he very readily believed, and in a short time eased him of a pocket-book with ten thousand crowns. But as there is no such thing as eternal love, this perjured beauty quitted him at the expiration of three months for a young English lord, equally foolish and more magnificent. L'Etang, who could not conceive how they could dismiss such a person as himself, resolved to avenge himself by taking a mistress still more celebrated, and loading her with favours. His new conquest raised him a thousand rivals; and when he compared himself with the crowd of adorers who sighed for her in vain, he had the pleasure of thinking himself more amiable, as he found himself more happy. However, having perceived that

10 THE BAD MOTHER,

he was not without uneasiness, she was desirous of convincing him, that there was nothing in the world which she was not resolved to quit for him, and proposed, for the sake of avoiding impertinents, that they should go together to Paris to forget all the world, and live only for each other. L'Etang was transported at this mark of tenderness. Every thing is got ready for the journey; they set out, they arrive, and choose their retreat in the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal. Fatima (that was the name of this beauty) asked and obtained, without difficulty, a coach to take the air. L'Etang was surprised at the number of friends that he found in this good city. These friends had never seen him; but his merit attracted them in crowds. Fatima received none but L'Etang's company, and he was always very sure of his friends and of her. This charming woman had, however, one weakness: she believed in dreams. One night she had had one which could not, she said, be effaced from her memory. L'Etang wanted to know this dream which engaged her attention so seriously. "I dreamed," said she, "that I was in a delicious apartment. In it was a damask bed of three different colours, with tapestry and sofas suited to this superb bed; pannels dazzling with gold, polished cabinets, porcelaine of Japan, China mon-
"kies,

“kies, the prettiest in the world; but all this
 “was nothing. ‘A toilette was ready set out,
 “I drew near it; what did I see? My heart
 “beats at it: a casket of diamonds; and what
 “diamonds! the most beautifull aigrette, the
 “finest ear-rings, the handsomest esclavage,
 “and a river without end. I am sure, Sir,
 “something very extraordinary will happen
 “to me. This dream has affected me very
 “strongly, and my dreams never deceive me.”

It was in vain that M. de l’Etang employed
 all his eloquence to persuade her that dreams
 signified nothing; she maintained that this dream
 did signify something, and, at length, he feared
 lest some of his rivals should propose to realise
 it. He was under a necessity therefore of capi-
 tulating, and, except in some few circumstances,
 resolved to accomplish it himself. We may
 easily judge, that this experiment did not cure
 her of dreaming: she took a delight in it, and
 dreamed so often, that even the fortune of good
 Master Corée became hardly any thing more
 than a dream. M. de l’Etang’s young wife,
 to whom this journey had not been very agree-
 able, demanded to be separated from the for-
 tunes of a husband, who abandoned her; and
 her portion, which he was obliged to restore,
 put him still less at his ease.

Play

12 THE BAD MOTHER,

Play is a resource. L'Etang pretended to excell at piquet; his friends, who made up a common purse, all betted for him, while one of them played against him. Every time that he threw out, "Faith," said one of the betters, "that is well played!" "There is no playing better," said another. In short, M. de l'Etang played the best in the world; but he never had the aces. While they insensibly stripped him, the faithful Fatima, who perceived his decline, dreamed one night that she quitted him, and left him the next day: however, as it is mortifying to fall off, he piqued himself upon his honour, and would not abate any thing of his grandeur, so that in a few years he was ruined.

He was now at his last shifts, when the good lady his mother, who had not managed her own reserve better, wrote to him to desire some money. He returned her answer, that he was very sorry; but that, far from being able to send her any relief, he stood in need of it himself. The alarm was already spread among their creditors, and the question was, who should first seize the ruins of their fortune, "What have I done!" said the distracted mother: "I have stripped myself of all for a son who has squandered every thing."

In the mean time what became of the unfortunate Jemmy? Jemmy, with a good understanding,

standing, the best heart, the handsomest figure in the world, and his little venture, was happily arrived at St. Domingo. It is well known how easy a Frenchman of good morals, and a good person, finds it to establish himself in the isles. The name of Corée, his own good sense and prudence, soon acquired him the confidence of the inhabitants. With the assistances that were offered him, he purchased himself a settlement, cultivated it, and rendered it flourishing; trade, which was then very brisk, enriched him in a short time, and in the space of five years he was become the object of the jealousy of the handsomest and richest widows and damsels of the colony. But alas! his fellow-collegian, who till that time had given him none but the most satisfactory news, now sent him word that his brother was ruined, and that his mother, abandoned by every body, was driven to the most dreadful extremities. This fatal letter was bedewed with tears. "Ah! my poor mother!" cried he, "I will fly to your relief." He would not trust this charge to any body. Accident, infidelity, neglect, or delay, might deprive her of the assistance sent by her son, and leave her to perish in indigence and despair. "Nothing ought to retain a son," said he to himself, "when the honour and life of a mother are at stake."

With

14 THE BAD MOTHER,

With these sentiments, Corée was only employed in the care of rendering his riches portable. He sold all his possessions, and this sacrifice cost him nothing; but he could not but feel some regret for a more precious treasure, which he left in America. Lucella, the young widow of an old colonist, who had left her immense riches, had cast upon Corée one of those looks which seem to penetrate to the bottom of the soul, and to unravel its character; one of those looks which decide the opinion, determine the inclination, and the sudden and confused effect of which is generally taken for a sympathetick emotion. She had imagined she saw in this young man every thing that could render a virtuous and sensible woman happy; and her love for him had not waited for reflection to give it birth and discover itself. Corée, on his side, had distinguished her among her rivals, as the most worthy of captivating the heart of a wise and virtuous man. Lucella, with a figure the most noble and interesting; an air the most animated, and yet the most modest; a brown complexion, but fresher than the rose; hair of the blackness of the ebony, and teeth of a dazzling whiteness and enamel; the stature and gait of one of Diana's nymphs; the smile and look of the companions of Venus; Lucella with all these charms was endowed with that
greatness

A MORAL TALE. 15

greatness of spirit, that loftiness of temper, that justness in her ideas, that rectitude in her sentiments, which make us say, though not with the greatest propriety, that such a woman has the soul of a man. It was not one of Lucella's principles to be ashamed of a virtuous inclination. Scarce had Corée confessed to her the choice of his heart, when he obtained from her, without evasion, a like confession, by way of reply; and their mutual inclination becoming more tender, in proportion as it became more considered, now wanted nothing but to be consecrated at the altar. Some disputes, concerning the inheritance of Lucella's husband, had retarded their happiness. These disputes were on the point of being settled, when the letter from Corée's friend arrived, to tear him all at once from what he held dearest in the world, except his mother. He repaired to the beautiful widow's, shewed her the letter from his friend, and asked her advice. "I flatter myself," said she, "that you have no need of it. Convert your wealth into mercantile commodities, hasten to the relief of your mother, pay your respects to all your friends, and come back again: my fortune awaits you. If I die, my will shall secure it to you; if I live, instead of a will you know what right you will have over it."

Corée,

16 THE BAD MOTHER,

Corée, struck with gratitude and admiration, seized the hands of this generous woman, and bathed them with his tears; but as he was launching out in encomiums on her, "Go," said she to him, "you are a child: entertain not the prejudices of Europe. The moment that a woman does any thing tolerably handsome, they cry her up as a prodigy, as if nature had not given us a soul. Should you, in my place now, be much pleased to see me in astonishment, and viewing in you, as a phenomenon, the pure emotion of a good heart?" "Pardon me," said Corée, "I ought to have expected it; but your principles, your sentiments, the ease, the simplicity of your virtues enchant me: I admire them without being amazed at them." "Go, my dear," said she to him, saluting him, "I am thine such as God has made me. Do your duty, and return as soon as possible."

He embarks, and with him he embarks all his fortune. The passage was pretty favourable till they came towards the Canaries; but there their vessel, pursued by a corsair from Morocco, was obliged to seek for safety in its sails. The corsair which chased them was on the point of joining them; and the captain, terrified at the danger of being boarded, was going to strike to the pirate. "Oh!

" my

“ my dear mother !” cried Corée, embracing the casket in which were contained all his hopes, and then tearing his hair with grief and rage, “ No,” said he, “ this barbarous African “ shall have my heart first.” Then addressing himself to the captain, the crew, and the affrighted passengers, “ What ! my friends,” said he, “ shall we surrender ourselves “ like cowards ? Shall we suffer this robber to carry us to Morocco, loaded with “ irons ; and to sell us like beasts ? Are we “ disarmed ? Are the people on board the “ enemy’s ship invulnerable ? or are they “ braver than we ? They want to board us ; “ let them ! what then ? we shall have them “ the nearer.” His courage re-animated their spirits, and the captain, embracing him, extolled him for having set the example.

Every thing is now got ready for defense ; the corsair boards them : the vessels dash against each other : death flies on both sides. In a short time the two ships are covered with a cloud of smoke and fire. The cannonade ceases ; day-light appears, and the sword singles out its victims. Corée, sabre in hand, made a dreadful slaughter ; the instant he saw an African throw himself on board, he ran up to him, and cleaved him in two, crying out, “ Oh ! my poor mother !” His fury was as that of the lioness defending her little

18 THE BAD MOTHER,

little ones; it was the last effort of nature in despair; and the gentlest, the most sensible heart that ever existed, was now become the most violent, and bloody. The captain discerned him every where, his eye flashing fire, and his arm drenched in blood. "This is not a mortal," said he to his companions, "it is a God who fights for us." His example kindled their courage. He finds himself at length hand to hand with the chief of the barbarians. "My God," cried he, "have pity of my mother!" and at these words, with a back-handed blow, he let out the pirate's bowels. From this moment the victory was decisive: the few who were left of the crew of the corsair begged their lives, and were put in irons. Corée's vessel, with her booty, arrives at length on the coasts of France; and this worthy son, without allowing himself one night's repose, repairs with his treasure to his unhappy mother. He finds her on the brink of the grave, and in a state more dreadful than death itself; stripped of all relief, and in the care of one man-servant, who, disgusted at suffering the indigence to which she was reduced, paid her, with regret, the last duties of an humiliating pity. The shame of her situation had induced her to forbid this servant from admitting any person, except the priest

priest and the charitable physician, who sometimes visited her. Corée asks to see her, and is refused.

“ Tell my name,” said he to the servant.
 —“ And what is your name?” —“ Jemmy.”
 The servant approaches the bed. “ A stranger,” says he, “ asks to see you, Madam.”
 —“ Alas! and who is this stranger?” —
 —“ He says that his name is Jemmy.” At this name her heart was so violently agitated, that she was near expiring. “ Ah! my son,” said she in a faint voice, and lifting upon him her dying eye-lids, “ Ah! my son, at what a moment are you returned to see your mother! Your hand will soon close her eyes.” What was the grief of this pious and tender child, to see that mother whom he had left in the bosom of luxury and opulence, to see her now in a bed surrounded with rags, the very description of which would make the stomach rise, if it were permitted me to give it! “ Oh! my mother,” cried he, throwing himself upon this bed of woe: his sobs choked his voice, and the rivers of tears with which he bathed the bosom of his expiring mother, were for a long time the only expression of his grief and love. “ Heaven punishes me,” replied she, “ for having loved too much an unnatural son; for having” He interrupted her: “ All is atoned for, my
 “ dear

20 THE BAD MOTHER,

“ dear mother,” said this virtuous young man;
 “ live: Fortune has loaded me with her
 “ favours, I come to pour them into the
 “ lap of Nature: it is for you that they are
 “ given me. Live: I have enough to make
 “ you love life.”—“ Ah! my dear child, if
 “ I have any desire to live, it is to expiate my
 “ injustice, it is to love a son of whom I was
 “ not worthy, a son whom I have deprived
 “ of his inheritance.” At these words she
 covered her face as unworthy to see the
 light. “ Ah! Madam,” cried he, pressing
 her in his arms, “ deprive me not of the sight
 “ of my mother. I am come across the seas
 “ to seek and relieve her.” At this instant
 arrive the priest and physician. “ See there,”
 said she, “ my child, the only comforters
 “ that heaven has left me; without their
 “ charity I should now be no more.” Corée
 embraces them, bursting into tears. “ My
 “ friends!” says he to them, “ my bene-
 “ factors! what do I not owe you! but for
 “ you I should no longer have had a mother:
 “ go on, recall her to life. I am rich; I
 “ am come to make her happy. Redouble your
 “ cares, your consolations, your assistances; re-
 “ store her to me.” The physician prudently
 saw that this situation was too violent for the
 sick lady. “ Go, Sir,” said he to Corée,
 “ trust in our zeal, and think of nothing but
 “ to

“ to provide her a convenient and wholesome
 “ lodging; to which the lady shall this even-
 “ ing be removed.”

Change of air, proper nourishment, or rather the revolution created by joy, and the calm which succeeded it, insensibly re-animated the organs of life. A profound chagrin had been the ground of the disease; consolation was the remedy. Corée learnt that his unhappy brother had just perished in misery. I draw a veil over the frightfull picture of his death, which he had but too justly merited. They kept the knowledge of it from a feeling mother, who was as yet too weak to support, without expiring, a new attack of grief. She learnt it at last, when her health was better established. All the wounds of her heart were now opened afresh, and the maternal tears trickled from her eyes. But heaven, while it took away from her a son unworthy of her tenderness, restored her one who had merited it by every sensible and touching tie of nature and virtue. He confided to her the desires of his soul; which were to embrace at once his mother and his wife. Madam Corée seized with joy the opportunity of going over with her son to America. A city filled with her follies, and misfortunes, was to her an odious place of residence; and the moment in which she embarked restored her a new life.

Heaven,

Heaven, which protects piety, granted them a favourable passage. Lucella received the mother of her lover as she would have received her own. Hymen made of these lovers the happiest couple, and their days still roll on in that unalterable peace, in those pure and serene pleasures, which are the portion of virtue.



THE GOOD MOTHER.

THE care of a mother for her children is of all duties the most religiously observed. This universal sentiment governs all the passions; it prevails even over the love of life. It renders the fiercest of animals sensible and gentle, the most sluggish indefatigable, the most timid courageous to excess: not one of them loses sight of its little ones, till the moment that their care becomes useless. We see only among mankind the odious examples of a too early desertion.

In the midst of a world, where vice, ingenious to disguise itself, takes a thousand seducing forms; it is there, above all, that the most
happy

happy disposition requires to be enlightened without ceasing. The more shelves there are, and the more they are hidden, the more need has the frail bark of innocence and happiness of a prudent pilot. What would have been, for example, the fate of Miss Troëne, if heaven had not made expressly for her a mother, who was one of ten thousand?

This respectable widow had devoted to the education of an only daughter the most agreeable years of her life. These were her reflexions at the age of five-and-twenty.

“ I have lost my husband,” said she;
 “ I have nothing but my daughter and myself:
 “ shall I live for myself? or shall I live for
 “ her? The world smiles upon me, and pleases
 “ me still; but if I give myself up to it, I
 “ abandon my daughter, and hazard her hap-
 “ piness and my own. Suppose that a life
 “ of noise and dissipation has all the charms
 “ that are attributed to it, how long may I
 “ be able to taste them? How few of my years,
 “ which are rolling on, have I to pass in the
 “ world? how many in solitude and the bo-
 “ som of my child? This world, which in-
 “ vites me now, will dismiss me soon with-
 “ out pity; and if my daughter should forget
 “ herself, according to my example; if she is
 “ unhappy through my negligence, what will
 “ be my comfort? Let me in good time add
 “ grace

24 THE GOOD MOTHER,

“ grace to my retreat: let me render it as
 “ agreeable as it is honourable; and let me sa-
 “ crifice to my daughter, who is every thing
 “ to me, that alien multitude, to whom in
 “ a short time I shall be nothing.”

From that moment this prudent mother be-
 came the friend and companion of her daugh-
 ter. But to obtain her confidence was not the
 work of a day.

Emily (that was the young lady's name)
 had received from nature a soul susceptible
 of the most lively impressions; and her mother,
 who studied it incessantly, experienced an
 uneasy joy on perceiving this sensibility, which
 does so much harm and so much good.
 “ Happy,” said she sometimes, “ happy the
 “ husband whom she will love, if he is de-
 “ serving of her tenderness; if by esteem and
 “ friendship he knows how to render dear to
 “ her the cares she shall take to please him!
 “ but woe be to him, if he humbles and shocks
 “ her: her wounded delicacy will be the tor-
 “ ment of them both. I see that if a reproach
 “ escapes even me, a slight complaint which
 “ she has not merited, tears of grief trickle from
 “ her eyes; her drooping heart is dispirited.
 “ Nothing is easier than to soothe her, no-
 “ thing easier than to frighten her.”

Temperate as was the life of Madam du
 Troëne, it was however conformable to her con-
 dition,

and relative to the design she had of instructing herself at leisure in the choice of a husband worthy of Emily. A crowd of admirers, caught with the charms of the daughter, paid, according to custom, assiduous court to the mother. Of this number was the Marquis de Verglan, who, to his own misfortune, was endowed with a very handsome figure. His glass and the ladies had so often told him so, that he could not but believe it. He listened to them with pleasure, contemplated himself with delight, smiled upon himself, and was eternally singing his own praises. Nothing could be objected to his politeness; but it was so cold, and so slight, in comparison to the attentions with which he honoured himself, that one might clearly perceive that he possessed the first place in his own esteem. He would have had, without thinking on them, all the graces of nature: he spoiled them all by affecting them. In regard to understanding, he wanted only justness, or rather reflexion. Nobody would have talked better than he, if he had known what he was going to say; but it was his first care to be of an opinion contrary to that of another. Right or wrong, was all one to him; he was sure of dazzling, of seducing, of persuading to whatever he would. He knew by heart all that little toilette chit-chat, all those pretty things

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which mean nothing. He was thoroughly versed in all the love-anecdotes of the city and court: who was the gallant of yesterday, who of to-day, who of the morrow; and how many times in the year such and such a lady had changed her admirers. He even knew a certain person who had refused to be upon the list, and who would have supplanted all his rivals, if he had chosen to give himself the trouble.

This young coxcomb was the son of an old friend of M. du Troëne, and the widow spoke of him to her daughter with a kind of compassion. "It is a pity," said she, "that they spoil this young man." He is of a good family, and might have succeeded: he had already succeeded but too well in the heart of Emily. That which is ridiculous in the eyes of a mother, is not always so in the eyes of a daughter. Youth is indulgent to youth; and there are such things as beautiful defects.

Verglan, on his side, thought Emily tolerably handsome, only a little too plain and simple; but that might be corrected. He took but very little care to please her; but when the first impression is made, every thing contributes to sink it deeper. The very dissipation of this young fop was a new attraction to Emily, as it threatened her with the danger of losing him; and

and nothing hastens, so much as jealousy, the progress of a growing love.

In giving an account of his life to Madam du Troëne, Verglan represented himself (as to be sure he ought) the most desirable man in the world.

Madam du Troëne dropt a hint concerning modesty; but he protested that nobody was less vain than himself; that he knew perfectly well that it was not for his own sake that they sought him; that his birth did a great deal, and that he owed the rest to his wit and figure, qualities which he had not given himself, and which he was far from being proud of.

The more pleasure Emily felt in seeing and hearing him, the more care she took to conceal it. A reproach from her mother would have touched her to the heart; and this delicate sensibility rendered her fearfull to excess.

In the mean time, Emily's charms, with which Verglan was so faintly touched, had inspired the discreet and modest Belzors with the tenderest passion. A just way of thinking, and an upright heart, formed the basis of his character. His agreeable and open figure was still more ennobled by the high idea that was conceived of his soul; for we are naturally disposed to seek, and believe that we discover,

in the features of a man, what we know to be in his heart.

Belzors, in whom nature had been directed to virtue from his infancy, enjoyed the ineffable advantage of being able to give himself up to it without precaution and constraint. Decency, honesty, candour, a frankness which gains confidence, together with a severity of manners which creates respect, had in him the free ease of habit. An enemy to vice, without pride; indulgent to follies, without contracting any; complying with innocent customs, incorruptible by bad examples, he swam upon the torrent of the world; beloved, respected even by those to whom his life was a reproach, and to whom the publick esteem delighted to oppose it, in order to humble their pride.

Madam du Troëne, charmed with the character of this young man, had secretly pitched upon him, as the most deserving husband she could give her daughter. She was inexhaustible in his commendations; and while Emily applauded with the modesty of her age, Madam du Troëne mistook the ingenuous and agreeable air which her daughter assumed towards him: for as the esteem with which Belzors inspired her was not mingled with any sentiment that she needed to conceal, Emily was quite at her ease,

It

It were to be wished, that she had been as free, and as tranquill, with the dangerous Verglan; tho' the painfull situation into which his presence cast her, had in good measure the appearance of spleen. If Madam du Troëne spoke in commendation of him, Emily looked down, and kept silence. "You do not seem to me," daughter," said Madam du Troëne, "to relish those light and shining graces, on which the world lays so much stress." "I know nothing at all of them," said Emily, blushing. The good mother concealed her joy: she thought she saw the plain and modest virtues of Belzors triumphing in Emily's heart over the little brilliant vices of Verglan, and those of his character; 'till an accident, slight in appearance, but striking to an attentive and discerning mother, drew her out of this illusion.

One of Emily's accomplishments was drawing. She had chosen the delineation of flowers, as the most suitable to her age: for what can be more natural than to see a rose blow beneath the hand of beauty! Verglan, by a taste somewhat resembling her's, was passionately fond of flowers; and he never appeared without a nosegay, the prettiest in the world.

One day Madam du Troëne's eyes were thrown casually on Verglan's nosegay. The day after, she perceived that Emily, perhaps without thinking of it, was drawing the flowers

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of it. It was natural enough, that the flowers she had seen the evening before should be still present to her imagination, and come, as it were, of their own accord, to offer themselves to her pencil; but that which was not quite so natural, was the air of enthusiasm which she betrayed in drawing them. Her eyes sparkled with the fire of genius; her mouth smiled amorously at every stroke of the pencil, and a colour more animated than that of the flowers which she was endeavouring to delineate, diffused itself over her cheeks. "Are you pleased with your execution," said the mother to her carelessly? "It is impossible," replied Emily, "to represent Nature well, when we have her not before our eyes." It was certain, however, that she had never copied her more faithfully.

Some few days after, Verglan came again with new flowers. Madam du Troëne, without any particularity, observed them, one after another; and, in Emily's next lesson, Verglan's nosegay was drawn again. The good mother continued her observations, and every trial confirming her suspicions, redoubled her uneasiness. "After all," said she, "I am alarmed perhaps at somewhat very innocent. Let me see, however, if she has any meaning in all this."

The

A MORAL TALE. 31

The studies and accomplishments of Emily were a secret to her mother's acquaintance. As she had only intended to make her relish solitude, and preserve her imagination from the dangers of meditation, and the tediousness of idleness; Madam du Troëne derived neither to herself nor daughter, the least vanity from those talents which she had cultivated with so much care. But one day when they were alone with Belzors, and the conversation turned on the great advantage of employing and amusing one's self, "My daughter," said Madam du Troëne, "has created herself
 " an amusement, which she relishes more and
 " more. I want to have you see some of her
 " designs." Emily opened her port-folio; and Belzors, charmed, was never weary of admiration of her performances. "How
 " soft and pure," said he, "are the pleasures of innocence! In vain does vice torment itself, it will never taste the like. Is
 " it not true, Madam, that the hour of labour
 " passes away quick? And yet you have
 " fixed it: see it here re-traced and produced
 " anew to your eyes. Time is never lost but
 " to the idle." Madam du Troëne listened with a secret complacency. Emily thought his observations very sensible, but was not in the least touched by them.

Some days after, Verglan came to see them. “Do you know, Sir,” says Madam du Troëne, “that my daughter has received the highest encomiums from Belzors on her talent for drawing? I want your opinion of it.” Emily, in confusion, blushed, hesitated, said that she had nothing finished by her, and beseeched her mother to wait till she should have some piece fit to be seen. She did not doubt but her mother was laying a snare for her. “Since there is a mystery in this, there is also a design,” said this discerning mother within herself: “she is afraid that Verglan may know his own flowers, and penetrate into the secret motive of the pleasure which she has taken in drawing them. My daughter loves this young fop; my fears were but too well founded.”

Madam du Troëne, solicited on all sides, excused herself still on account of Emily’s youth, and the resolution she had taken not to constrain her in her choice. However, this choice alarmed her. “My daughter,” said she, “is going to prefer Verglan: there is, at least, room to think so; and this young man has every quality that can render a woman unhappy. If I declare my will to Emily, if I only suffer her to have the slightest perception of it, she will make it a law to subscribe to it, without

“ out murmuring; she will marry a man whom
 “ she does not love, and the remembrance of
 “ the man she loves will haunt her even in the
 “ arms of another. I know her soul; she will
 “ become the victim of her duty. But shall
 “ I ordain this grievous sacrifice? God for-
 “ bid! No: let her own inclination decide
 “ it; but I may direct her inclination by
 “ enlightening it, and that is the only lawfull
 “ use of the authority that is given me. I am
 “ certain of the goodness of heart, of the just-
 “ nefs of my daughter’s sentiments; let me
 “ supply, by the light natural to my years, the
 “ inexperience of her’s; let her see by her
 “ mother’s eyes, and fancy, if possible, that
 “ she consults only her own inclination.”

Every time that Verglan and Belzors met to-
 gether at Madam du Troëne’s, she turned the
 conversation on the manners, customs, and max-
 ims of the world. She encouraged contradic-
 tion; and, without taking any side, gave their
 dispositions room to display themselves. Those
 little adventures with which society abounds, and
 which entertain the idle curiosity of the circles at
 Paris, most commonly furnished matter for their
 reflexions. Verglan, light, decisive, and lively,
 was constantly on the side of the fashion. Bel-
 zors, in a modefter tone, constantly defended
 the cause of morality with a noble freedom,

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The arrangement of Count d'Auberive with his lady was at that time the town-talk. It was said, that after a pretty brisk quarrel, and bitter complaints on both sides, on the subject of their mutual infidelity, they agreed, that they owed each other nothing; that they had concluded by laughing at the folly of being jealous without loving; that d'Auberive had consented to see the Chevalier de Clange make love to his wife; and that she had promised, on her side, to receive with the greatest politeness the Marchioness de Talbe, to whom d'Auberive paid his court; that the peace had been ratified by a supper, and that two couple of lovers never maintained a better understanding with each other.

At this recital Verglan cried out, that nothing was wiser. "They talk of the good old times:" said he, "let them produce an instance of the manners of our forefathers comparable to this. Formerly an instance of infidelity set a family in flames; they shut up, they beat their wives. If the husband made use of the liberty that was reserved to him, his sad and faithfull half was obliged to put up with the injury, and vent her moans at home, as in an obscure prison. If she imitated her wandering husband, it was with terrible risks. Nothing less than her lover's and her own life were

" at

“at stake. They had the folly to attach the
 “honour of the man to the virtue of his wife;
 “and the husband, who was not the less a
 “fine gentleman for intriguing elsewhere him-
 “self, became the ridiculous object of pub-
 “lick contempt on the first false step of
 “his lady. Upon honour, I do not con-
 “ceive how, in these barbarous ages, they
 “had the courage to marry. The bands of
 “Hymen were then downright chains. Now-
 “a-days, complaisance, freedom, peace, reign
 “in the bosom of families. If the mar-
 “ried pair love one another, so much the
 “better; they live together, they are happy.
 “If they cease to love, they tell it like well-
 “bred persons, and dispense with each other’s
 “promise of fidelity. They give over be-
 “ing lovers, and become friends. These are
 “what I call social manners, free and easy.
 “This makes one long to be married.”
 “You find it then quite easy,” said Madam
 du Troëne, “for a wife to be the confidante
 “of her husband, and for him to be the com-
 “plaisant friend of his wife?”—“To be
 “sure, provided it be mutual. Is it not just
 “to grant our confidence to those who ho-
 “nour us with theirs, and to render each
 “other by turns the offices of friendship?
 “Can a man have a better friend than his
 “wife, or the wife a surer and more intimate
 “friend.

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“ friend than her husband ? With whom shall
 “ we be free, if not with the person, who,
 “ from situation, is one with us ? And when
 “ unfortunately we no longer find any plea-
 “ sure at home, what can be better, than
 “ to seek it abroad, to return each at
 “ their own time, without jealousy and
 “ restraint ?”

“ Nothing is more pleasant,” said Belzors,
 “ than this new method ; but you and I
 “ have a great deal of ground to go over
 “ before we can relish it. In the first place,
 “ we must give up all love for ourselves,
 “ wife, and children ; we must be able to
 “ accustom ourselves to consider, with-
 “ out repugnance, as being one half of
 “ one’s self, somebody whom we despise suf-
 “ ficiently, to deliver up” “ Well,”
 replied Verglan, “ what, but mere prejudices,
 “ are all these scruples ! what hinders us from
 “ esteeming one another, if it be settled that
 “ there is no longer any scandal in it ?”
 “ When that is settled,” said Belzors, “ all
 “ the ties of society are broken. The in-
 “ violable sanctity of the marriage-tie forms
 “ the sanctity of all the ties of nature. Re-
 “ member, my friend, that if there are no
 “ longer any sacred duties for the parents,
 “ there will no longer be any for the children.
 “ All these connections depend on each other.
 “ Family-

“ Family-quarrels were violent in the days
 “ of our fathers; but the mass of morals
 “ was sound, and the wound soon closed
 “ up again. At present it is a languishing
 “ body, wasting by a slow poison. On the
 “ other side, my dear Verglan, we have
 “ not now the idea of those pure and intimate
 “ pleasures which the married pair felt amidst
 “ their family; nor of that union which form-
 “ ed the delight of their youth, and the con-
 “ solation of their advanced years. Now-a-
 “ days, when a mother is afflicted at the dis-
 “ sipations of her son, or a father over-
 “ whelmed with any reverse of fortune; are
 “ they a refuge or support to each other?
 “ They are obliged to unbosom their grief
 “ abroad; and the consolation of strangers
 “ is very weak indeed.”

“ You talk like an oracle, my sage Bel-
 “ zors,” said Verglan. “ But who has told
 “ you that two married persons would not
 “ do best to love, and to be faithful to each
 “ other all their lives? I am only, if un-
 “ fortunately this mutual liking should cease,
 “ for their consoling each other, and settling
 “ matters amicably, without forbidding those
 “ who may have loved reciprocally from the
 “ times of our fathers, to love on still, if
 “ their heart inclines them to it.” “ Ay,”
 said Madam du Troëne, “ what is there to
 “ hinder

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“hinder them?”—“What is there to hinder them, Madam?” replied Belzors. “Custom, example, the *bon ton*, the facility of living, without shame, according to their liking. Verglan will agree, that the life led in the world is agreeable; and change is naturally pleasing: our very weakness invites us to it. Who then will resist this inclination, if they take off the curb of morality?” “I, I take off nothing,” said Verglan; “but I am for every body’s living according to their liking, and I very very much approve of the course that d’Auberive and his lady have taken to overlook on both sides what is called injuries. If they are satisfied, every body else ought to be so too.”

As he finished these last words, a servant announced the Marquis d’Auberive. “Ah! Marquis, you come very opportunely,” said Verglan: “tell us, prithee, if your story be true. They say that your lady forgives you your rhubarb, and that you pass by her senna.” “Psha! what stuff!” said d’Auberive to him carelessly.—“I have maintained that nothing was more reasonable; but Belzors there condemns you without appeal.”—“Why so, pray? Would not he have done as much? My wife is young and handsome; a coquette; that is quite

“ quite evident. At the bottom, however, I
 “ believe her to be very virtuous ; but though
 “ she should err a little, justice ought
 “ to take place. I conceive, however, that
 “ a person more jealous than myself may
 “ condemn me ; but what astonishes me is,
 “ that Belzors should be the first. I have
 “ hitherto received nothing but commenda-
 “ tions. Nothing is more natural than my
 “ proceeding ; and all the world felicitate me
 “ upon it as on something marvellous. It
 “ looks as if they did not think I had under-
 “ standing enough to take a reasonable step.
 “ Upon honour, I am quite confounded at
 “ the compliments I receive on it. As to the
 “ rigid gentlemen, I honour them sufficiently ;
 “ but I live for myself. Let every one do as
 “ much, and the happiest will always be the
 “ wisest.” — “ Well, how is the Marchio-
 “ ness ?” said Madam du Troëne to him,
 with a design of changing the subject. —
 “ Wonderfully well, Madam ; we supped
 “ together last night, and I never saw her
 “ in such good-humour.” “ I will lay a
 “ wager,” says Verglan, “ that you will
 “ take her again some day.” — “ Faith, very
 “ possibly : for but yesterday, when we got
 “ up from table, I caught myself saying
 “ tender things to her.”

This

This first experiment made the most lively impression on Emily's understanding. Her mother, who perceived it, gave free course to her reflexions; but in order to put her into the way, "It is wonderfull," said she, "how much opinions depend upon tempers. Here now these two young men, educated with the same care, both endued with the same principles of honesty and virtue; observe, however, how they differ from one another! and each of them believes he is in the right." Emily's heart did its best to excuse in Verglan the fault of having defended the manners of the age. "With what levity," said she, "do they treat modesty and fidelity! how they sport with what is most sacred in nature! and Verglan gives into these irregularities! Why has he not the soul of Belzors!"

Some time after, Emily and her mother, being at the play, Belzors and Verglan presented themselves at their box, and Madam du Troëne invited them both to take their seats there. The play was *Ines* *. The scene of the children gave Verglan an opportunity of uttering some *bons mots*, which he put off as excellent criticisms. Belzors, without listening to him, melted into tears, and took

* *Ines de Castro*, from which Mallet's *Elvira* is taken,

took no pains to conceal it. His rival raillyed him on his weakness. "What," said he to him, "do children make you cry?" "And what would you have me be affected by?" said Belzors. "Yes, I confess, I never hear without much emotion the tender names of father and mother; the pathos of nature penetrates me; even the most touching love interests me, moves me much less." *Ines* was followed by *Nanine* †; and when they came to the catastrophe, "Oh!" said Verglan, "that is carrying the jest too far: let Dolban love this little wench, with all my heart; but to marry her, I think, is rather too much." "It is a folly, perhaps," replied Belzors; "but I feel myself capable of it: when virtue and beauty are united, I can't answer for my discretion." Not one of their observations escaped Madam du Troëne; Emily, still more attentive, blushed at the advantage which Belzors had over his rival. After the play, they saw the Chevalier d'Olcet pass by in weepers. "What is the meaning of this, Chevalier?" said Verglan to him with an air of gaiety. "An old unkle," replies d'Olcet, "who has been so kind as to leave me ten thousand crowns

† A petit piece of Voltaire; the story somewhat like *Pamela*.

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“ crowns a-year.” — “ Ten thousand crowns!
 “ I give you joy. This unkle was a brave
 “ old fellow. Ten thousand crowns! charm-
 “ ing.” Belzors, embracing him in his turn,
 said to him: “ Chevalier, I condole with you
 “ on his death: I know that you think too
 “ justly to conceive any unnatural joy on the
 “ occasion.” “ He has long been as a father
 “ to me,” said the Chevalier, confounded
 at the pleasant air he had assumed; “ but he
 “ was so old, you know!” “ That is a cause
 “ for patience,” replied Belzors mildly;
 “ but not for consolation. A good relation
 “ is the best of friends; and the riches he has
 “ left you are not equal to the value of such
 “ a one.” “ An old unkle is but a dull kind
 “ of friend,” said Verglan; “ and it is a
 “ rule, that every one must live in his turn.
 “ Young folks would be much to be pityed,
 “ if old fellows were immortal.” Belzors
 changed the discourse, in order to spare Ver-
 glan an humiliating reply. At every stroke
 of this contrast, Emily’s heart was cruelly
 torn. Madam du Troëne saw with joy the
 respectfull and sensible air she assumed towards
 Belzors, and the cold and chagrined air with
 which she replied to Verglan’s compliments;
 but in order to bring about another tryal,
 she invited them both to supper.

They

They played at cards. Verglan and Belzors had a *tête-à-tête* at trictrac. Verglan liked nothing but high play; Belzors would play for as little as you pleased. The party was interesting. Mademoiselle du Troëne was of the number of lookers-on; and the good mother, in making her own party, kept an eye upon her daughter, to read in her countenance what passed in her heart. Fortune favoured Belzors; Emily, displeased as she was with Verglan, had too good a heart not to suffer, on seeing him engaged in a serious loss. The young coxcomb could no longer contain himself; he grew angry, he doubled the game, and, before supper, he was on the point of playing upon honour. Ill-humour had seized him: he did his utmost to be merry; but the alteration of his countenance banished all joy. He perceived himself that they pitied him, and that they did not laugh at some pleasantries he endeavoured to throw out; he was humbled, and indignation would have taken place, if they had not quitted the table. Belzors, whom neither his own good-luck, nor the chagrin of his rival, had moved, was easy and modest, according to custom. They sat down again to play. Madam du Troëne, who had finished her own party, came to be present at this, extremely uneasy at the issue it might have, but desirous that

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that it might make its impression on the soul of Emily. The success exceeded her expectation: Verglan lost more than he had to pay: his trembling hand and pale countenance expressed the trouble he wanted to conceal. Belzors, with an unbounded complaisance, gave him as many opportunities of revenging himself, as he thought proper; and when, by doubling the game, he had suffered Verglan to get off for a reasonable sum, "If you please," said he, "we will stop here: I think I may fairly win as much as I was resolved to lose." So much moderation and discretion excited a murmur of applause in the company. Verglan alone appeared insensible to it, and said, on getting up, with an air of disdain, "It was not worth the trouble of playing so long for."

Emily did not sleep that night, so violently was her soul agitated with what she had just seen and heard. "What a difference!" said she; "and by what caprice is it that I must sigh at having been enlightened? Ought not the seduction to cease, as soon as we perceive that we are seduced? I admire one, and love the other. What is this misunderstanding between the heart and the reason, which makes us still hold dear that which we cease to esteem?"

In the morning, she appeared, according to custom,

custom, at her mother's levée. "You seem
 "strangely altered," said Madam du Troëne.
 —"Yes, Madam, I am very much so."—
 "What, have not you slept well?"—"Very
 "little," said she, with a sigh.—"You
 "must endeavour, however to look hand-
 "some; for I am going to take you this
 "morning to the Thuilleries, where all Paris
 "is to be assembled. I used to lament that
 "the finest garden in the world was aban-
 "doned: I am very glad it is come into
 "fashion again."

Verglan failed not to repair there, and Ma-
 dam du Troëne retained him about her. The
 view of this walk had the air of enchant-
 ment. A thousand beauties, in all the gaiety
 of dress, were seated round the basin, whose
 sides are decorated by sculpture. The superb
 walk which this basin crowns, was filled
 with young nymphs, who by their charms
 and accomplishments attracted the desires
 after their steps. Verglan knew them all, and
 smiled upon them, following them with his
 eyes. "This here," said he, "is Fatimé.
 "Nothing is more tender and sensible: she
 "lives like an angel with Cleon: he has given
 "her twenty thousand crowns in six months;
 "they love like two turtles. That there is
 "the celebrated Corinna: her house is the
 "temple of luxury; her suppers the most
 "brilliant

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“ brilliant in Paris: she does the honours of
 “ them with a grace that enchants us. Do
 “ you see that fair beauty who looks so mo-
 “ dest, and whose glances wander languish-
 “ ingly on every side? She has three lovers,
 “ each of whom flatters himself, that he alone
 “ is the happy man. It is a pleasure to see
 “ her amidst her adorers, distributing slight
 “ favours to each, and persuading each in
 “ their turns, that she jilts their rivals. She
 “ is a model of coquetry, and nobody de-
 “ ceives a set of lovers with so much address
 “ and sprightliness. She will go a great way
 “ on my word, and I have told her so.”
 “ You are in her confidence then?” said
 Madam du Troëne.—“ Oh, yes, they don’t
 “ dissemble with me: they know me; they
 “ know very well, that they cannot im-
 “ pose upon me.” “ And you, Belzors,”
 said Madam du Troëne to the sensible and
 virtuous young man, who had joined them,
 “ are you initiated in these mysteries?”—
 “ No, Madam: I can believe that all that is
 “ very amusing; but the charm makes the
 “ danger.” Madam du Troëne observed that
 the modest women received, with a cold and
 reserved air, the smiling and familiar salute
 of Verglan, while they returned with an air
 of esteem and friendship the respectfull saluta-
 tion of Belzors. She rallied Verglan on

this distinction, in order to make Emily perceive it. "It is true," said he, "Madam, that they behave rigidly to me in publick; but *tête-à-tête*, they make me amends for it."

On her return home with them, she received a visit from Eleonora, a young widow of uncommon beauty. Eleonora spoke of the misfortune she had sustained in losing a deserving husband; she spoke of it, with so much sensibility, candour and grace, that Madam du Troëne, Emily and Belzors listened to her, with tears in their eyes. "To a young, handsome woman," said Verglan in a gay tone, "a husband is a trifling loss, and easy to be repaired." "Not to me, Sir," replied the tender and modest Eleonora: "a husband who honoured a wife of my age with his esteem and his confidence, and whose delicate love never was tainted either by fears or jealousy, or the negligences of habitude, is not one of those whom we can easily replace." "He had, I take it for granted, a fine person?" said Verglan.—"No, Sir, but his soul was beautifull." "A beautifull soul," replied Verglan, with a disdainfull air, "a beautifull soul! He was young at least?"—"Not at all; he was of an age wherein we are affected when we have any occasion to be so."—"But if he
" was

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“ was neither young, nor handsome, I don’t
 “ see why you should afflict yourself. Confi-
 “ dence, esteem, handsome treatment, attend
 “ of course an amiable woman; nothing of
 “ that kind could have been wanting to you.
 “ Believe me, Madam, the essential point
 “ is to suit yourself, as to age and figure, to
 “ unite the Graces with the Loves, in one
 “ word, to marry a handsome man, or to
 “ preserve your liberty.” “ Your advice is
 “ very gallant,” replied Eleonora, “ but un-
 “ fortunately it is misplaced.” “ There is
 “ a pretty prude!” said Verglan, as soon as
 she was gone. “ Prudery, Sir,” replied Ma-
 dam du Troëne, “ is an exaggerated copy of
 “ prudence and reason; and I see nothing in
 “ Eleonora but what is plain and natural.”
 “ For my part,” said Belzors, “ I think her
 “ as respectable as she is handsome.” “ Re-
 “ spect her, Sir, respect her,” resumed Ver-
 glan with vivacity: “ who hinders you?
 “ She is the only person can take it ill.”
 “ Do you know,” interrupted Madam du
 Troëne, “ who could console Eleonora?
 “ Such a man as Belzors: and if I were the
 “ confidante that he consulted on his choice,
 “ I would persuade him to think of her.”
 “ You do me great honour, Madam,” said
 Belzors, colouring; “ but Eleonora deserves a
 I “ heart

“ heart that is disengaged, and unhappily mine
 “ is not so.” At these words he took his leave,
 quite confounded with the dismissal which he
 thought he had received. “ For in short,”
 said he, “ to invite me herself to pay my ad-
 “ dresses to Eleonora, is not that giving me
 “ notice to renounce Emily? Alas! how lit-
 “ tle my heart is known to her!” Verglan,
 who took it in the same sense, affected to pity
 his rival. He spoke of him as one of the
 honestest men in the world. “ It is pity he is
 “ so gloomy,” said he, with a tone of com-
 passion: “ that is all they get by their virtue,
 “ they grow tiresome, and are dismissed.”
 Madam du Troëne, without explaining herself,
 assured him that she had not intended saying
 any thing disobliging to a man for whom she
 had a most particular esteem and regard. In
 the mean time Emily sat with down-cast eyes,
 and her blushes betrayed the agitation of her
 soul. Verglan, not doubting but this con-
 fusion was an emotion of joy, retired in tri-
 umph, and the day following wrote her a
 billet conceived in these terms. “ You must
 “ have thought me very romantick, beautifull
 “ Emily, in having so long spoke to you only
 “ by my eyes! Do not accuse me of an unjust
 “ diffidence: I have read your heart, and
 “ if I had only that to consult, I should be
 “ very sure of its answer. But you depend on

56 THE GOOD MOTHER,

“ a mother, and mothers have their caprices.
 “ Happily your mother loves you, and her af-
 “ fection has enlightened her choice. The
 “ dismissal of Belzors apprizes me that she
 “ has determined; but your consent ought to
 “ precede hers: I wait it with the most tender
 “ impatience, and the most violent love.”

Emily opened this billet without knowing whence it came: she was as much offended as surprized at it, and without hesitation communicated it to her mother. “ I take very kindly
 “ of you,” said Madam du Troëne, “ this
 “ mark of your friendship; but I owe you in
 “ my turn confidence for confidence. Belzors
 “ has writ to me; read his letter.” Emily obeyed and read: “ Madam, I honour the vir-
 “ tue, I admire the beauty, I do justice to
 “ Eleonora; but has heaven favoured only
 “ Her? And after having adored in your image
 “ every thing that heaven has made most af-
 “ fecting, do you think me in a condition to
 “ follow the counsel which you have given
 “ me? I will not say to you how cruel it is;
 “ my respect stifles my complaints. If I have
 “ not the name, I have at least the sentiments
 “ of your son, and that character cannot be
 “ effaced.”

Emily could not finish without the most lively emotion. Her mother pretended not to perceive it, and said to her, “ There now,

“ child, I indeed must answer these two rivals;
 “ but *you* must dictate my answers.”—“ I,
 “ Madam!”—“ Who else? Is it I, whom
 “ they demand in marriage? Is it my heart
 “ that I am to consult?”—“ Ah! Madam,
 “ is not your will mine! Have not you the
 “ right to dispose of me!”—“ You are very
 “ good, my dear; but as your own hap-
 “ piness is concerned, it is just that you
 “ should decide on it. These young men are
 “ both well born; their condition and fortunes
 “ nearly the same: see which comes up nearest
 “ to the idea you have formed of a good hus-
 “ band. Let us keep him, and dismiss the
 “ other.” Emily, struck, kissed her mother’s
 hands, and bathed them with her tears.
 “ Complete your goodness,” said she to her,
 “ by enlightening me in my choice: the
 “ more important it is, the more need have
 “ I for your advice to determine it. The
 “ husband whom my mother shall choose for
 “ me shall be dear to me; my heart dares pro-
 “ mise that.”—“ No, my dear, there is
 “ no loving out of mere duty, and you know
 “ better than myself the man who is likely
 “ to make you happy. If you are not so, I
 “ will console you: I would readily share your
 “ sorrows, but I would not be the cause of
 “ them. Come, I take pen in hand, I am
 “ going to write; you need but to dictate.”

Imagine the trouble, the confusion, the moving situation of Emily. Trembling by the side of this tender mother, one hand on her eyes and the other on her heart, she essayed in vain to obey her; her voice expired on her lips. "Well," said the good mother, "to which of the two are we to return an answer? make an end, or I shall grow impatient." "To Verglan," said Emily, with a feeble and faltering voice.—"To Verglan, be it so; what shall I say to him?"

"It is impossible, Sir, that a man, so necessary to society as yourself, should renounce it to live in the bosom of his family. My Emily has not qualities sufficient to indemnify you for the sacrifices which she would require. Continue to embellish the world; for it is for that you are made."—"Is this all?"—"Yes, Madam."—"And to Belzors, what shall we say to him?" Emily continued to dictate with somewhat more confidence. "To deem you worthy of a woman as virtuous as handsome, was not, Sir, to forbid you to make a choice which interests me as much as it does me honour; it was even to encourage you. Your modesty has reversed things, and you have been unjust both to yourself and to me. Come, and learn to judge better of the intentions of a good mother. I dispose of the heart of
I " my

“ my daughter, and I esteem none in the world more than yourself.”

“ Come hither, my child, that I may embrace you,” cried Madam du Troëne; “ you fulfill the wishes of your mother, and you could not have said better, though you had consulted my heart.”

Belzors hastened to them quite beside himself with joy. Never was marriage more applauded, more fortunate. Belzors’ affection was divided between Emily and her mother, and it was a moot point among the world, which of the two he loved most.



THE

SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS.

IN the mountains of Savoy, not far from the road from Briançon to Modena, is a solitary valley, the sight of which inspires travellers with a pleasing melancholy. Three little hills in form of an amphitheatre, on which are scattered, at a great distance from each other, some shepherds huts, torrents that fall from the mountains, clumps of trees here

54 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,
and there, pastures always green, form the
ornament of this rural place.

The Marchioness of Fonrose was returning from France to Italy with her husband. The axle-tree of their carriage broke; and as the day was on the decline, they were obliged to seek in this valley for some shelter to pass the night. As they advanced towards one of the huts, they saw a flock going that way, conducted by a shepherdess whose gait astonished them. They drew nearer, and heard a heavenly voice, whose plaintive and moving accents made the echoes groan.

“How the setting sun still glitters with a
“gentle light! It is thus,” said she, “that
“at the end of a painful race, the exhausted
“soul departs to grow young again in the
“pure source of immortality. But alas, how
“distant is the period, and how long is life!”
On saying these words, the shepherdess retired with her head inclined; but the negligence of her attitude seemed to give still more nobleness and majesty to her person, and deportment.

Struck with what they saw, and still more with what they had just heard, the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose redoubled their pace, in order to overtake this shepherdess whom they admired. But what was their surprise, when under the plainest head-dress, beneath

neath the most humble garb, they saw all the graces, all the beauties united! "Child," said the Marchioness to her, on seeing that she avoided them, "fear nothing; we are travellers whom an accident obliges to seek shelter in these huts till the day: will you be so good as to be our guide?" "I pity you," "Madam," said the shepherdess to her, looking down and blushing: "these huts are inhabited by poor wretches, and you will be very ill lodged." "You lodge there without doubt yourself," replied the Marchioness; "and I can easily endure, for one night, the inconveniencies which you suffer all ways." "I am formed for that," said the shepherdess, with a modesty that charmed them. "No, surely," said the Marquis de Fonrose, who could no longer dissemble the emotion she had caused in him; "no, you are not formed to suffer; and Fortune is very unjust! Is it possible, lovely damsel, that so many charms are buried in this desert, under that habit?" "Fortune, Sir," replied Adelaïde, (this was the name of the shepherdess) "Fortune is not cruel but when she takes from us that which she has given us. My condition has its pleasures for one who knows no other, and custom creates wants for you, which shepherds do not know." "That may be," said the Marquis, "with respect

56 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,

“ to those whom heaven has placed from their
 “ birth in this obscure condition; but you,
 “ astonishing damsel, you whom I admire,
 “ you who enchant me, you were never born
 “ what you now are; that air, that gait, that
 “ voice, that language, every thing betrays
 “ you. But two words which you have just
 “ now spoken, proclaim a cultivated under-
 “ standing, a noble soul. Proceed, teach
 “ us what misfortune can have reduced you to
 “ this strange abasement.” “ For a man in
 “ misfortune,” replied Adelaïde, “ there are
 “ a thousand ways to extricate himself; for a
 “ woman, you know, there is no other honest
 “ resource than servitude, and the choice of
 “ masters. They do well, in my opinion,
 “ who prefer the good. You are now going
 “ to see mine; you will be charmed with the
 “ innocence of their lives, the candour, the
 “ simplicity, the probity of their manners.”

While she talked thus, they arrived at the hut. It was separated by a partition from the fold into which this *incognita* drove her sheep, telling them over with the most serious attention, and without deigning to take any further notice of the travellers, who contemplated her. An old man and his wife, such as Philemon and Baucis are described to us, came forth to meet their guests with that village-honesty, which recalls the golden age to our minds.

minds. “ We have nothing to offer you,” said the good woman, “ but fresh straw for a bed, milk, fruit and rie-bread for your food; but the little that heaven gives us, we will most heartily share with you.” The travellers, on entering the hut, were surprised at the air of regularity which every thing breathed there. The table was one single plank of walnut-tree highly polished: they saw themselves in the enamel of the earthen vessels designed for their milk. Every thing presented the image of chearful poverty, and of the first wants of nature agreeably satisfied. “ It is our dear daughter,” said the good woman, “ who takes upon her the management of our house. In the morning before her flock ramble far into the country, and while they begin to graze round the house on the grass covered with dew, she washes, cleans, and sets every thing in order, with a dexterity that charms us.” “ What!” said the Marchioness, “ is this shepherdes your daughter?” “ Ah! Madam, would to heaven she were!” cried the good old woman; “ it is my heart that calls her so, for I have a mother’s love for her; but I am not so happy as to have borne her; we are not worthy to have given her birth.”—“ Who is she then? Whence comes she? and what misfortune has reduced her to such a

58 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,

“ condition?”—“ All that is unknown to us.
 “ It is now four years since she came in the
 “ habit of a female peasant to offer herself to
 “ keep our flocks; we would have taken her
 “ for nothing, so much had her good look and
 “ pleasing manner won upon our hearts. We
 “ doubted her being born a villager; but our
 “ questions afflicted her, and we thought it our
 “ duty to abstain from them. This respect has
 “ but augmented in proportion as we have be-
 “ come better acquainted with her soul; but the
 “ more we would humble ourselves to her,
 “ the more she humbles herself to us. Never
 “ had daughter more attention for her father
 “ and mother, nor officiousness more tender.
 “ She cannot obey us, because we are far from
 “ commanding her; but it seems as if she saw
 “ through us, and every thing that we can wish
 “ is done, before we perceive that she thinks of
 “ it. She is an angel come down among us
 “ to comfort our old age.” “ And what is
 “ she doing now in the fold?” demanded
 the Marchioness.—“ Giving the flock fresh
 “ litter; drawing the milk from the ewes
 “ and she-goats. This milk, pressed out
 “ by her hand, seems to become the more
 “ delicate for it. I who go and sell it in the
 “ town, cannot serve it fast enough. They
 “ think it delicious. The dear child employs
 “ herself,

“ herself, while she is watching the flock, in
 “ works of straw and osier, which are admi-
 “ red by all. Every thing becomes valuable
 “ beneath her fingers. You see, Madam,”
 continued the good old woman, “ you see here
 “ the image of an easy and quiet life: it is
 “ she that procures it to us. This heavenly
 “ daughter is never employed but to make us
 “ happy.” “ Is she happy herself?” demand-
 ed the Marquis de Fonrose. “ She endeavours
 “ to persuade us so,” replied the old man;
 “ but I have frequently observed to my wife,
 “ that at her return from the pasture, she had
 “ her eyes bedewed with tears, and the most
 “ afflicted air in the world. The moment she
 “ sees us, she affects to smile: but we see
 “ plainly that she has some grief that con-
 “ sumes her. We dare not ask her what it is.
 “ Ah! Madam,” said the old woman, “ how
 “ I suffer for this child, when she persists in
 “ leading out her flocks to pasture in spite of
 “ rain and frost! many a time have I thrown
 “ myself on my knees, in order to prevail
 “ with her to let me go in her stead; but I
 “ never could prevail on her. She goes out
 “ at sun-rise, and returns in the evening be-
 “ numbed with cold.” “ Judge now,” says she
 to me, “ whether I would suffer you to quit
 “ your fire-side, and expose yourself at your
 “ age to the rigours of the season. I am scarce
 “ able

60 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,

“able to withstand it myself. Nevertheless,
“she brings home under her arm the wood
“with which we warm ourselves; and when
“I complain of the fatigue she gives herself,
“Have done, have done, my good mother,
“it is by exercise that I keep myself from
“cold: labour is made for my age.” In
“short, Madam, she is as good as she is
“handsome, and my husband and I never
“speak of her, but with tears in our eyes.”
“And if she should be taken from you?” said
the Marchioness. “We should lose,” interrupted the old man, “all that we hold dearest
“in the world; but if she herself was to be the
“happier for it, we would die happy in
“that consolation.” “Oh! ay,” replied the
old woman shedding tears, “heaven grant her
“a fortune worthy of her, if it be possible!
“it was my hope, that that hand, so dear to
“me, would have closed my eyes, for I love
“her more than my life.” Her arrival broke
off their discourse.

She appeared with a pail of milk in one hand, a basket of fruit in the other; and after saluting them with an ineffable grace, she directed her attention to the care of the family, as if nobody observed her. “You give
“yourself a great deal of trouble, my dear
“child,” said the Marchioness. “I endeavour, Madam,” replied she, to fulfill
“the

“ the intention of those I serve, who are
 “ desirous of entertaining you in the best man-
 “ ner they are able. You will have,” conti-
 nued she, spreading over the table a coarse,
 but very white cloth, “ you will have a frugal
 “ and rural repast: this bread is not the whi-
 “ test in the world, but it tastes pretty well;
 “ the eggs are fresh, the milk is good, and the
 “ fruits, which I have just now gathered, are
 “ such as the season affords.” The diligence,
 the attention, the noble and becoming grace
 with which this wonderfull shepherdes paid
 them all the duties of hospitality, the respect
 she showed for her master and mistress, whe-
 ther she spoke to them, or whether she sought to
 read in their eyes what they wanted her to do,
 all these things filled the Marquis and Marchio-
 ness of Fonrose with astonishment and admira-
 tion. As soon as they were laid down on the
 bed of fresh straw which the shepherdes had pre-
 pared for them herself, “ Our adventure has the
 “ air of a prodigy,” said they one to another,
 “ we must clear up this mystery; we must
 “ carry away this child along with us.”

At break of day, one of the men, who had
 been up all night mending their carriage, came
 to inform them that it was thoroughly repaired,
 Madam de Fonrose, before she set out, ordered
 the shepherdes to be called to her. “ With-
 “ out wanting to pry,” said she, “ into the
 “ secret

62 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,

“ secret of your birth, and the cause of
“ your misfortune; all that I see, all that I
“ hear, interests me in your favour. I see
“ that your spirit has raised you above ill for-
“ tune; and that you have suited your senti-
“ ments to your present condition: your
“ charms and your virtues render it respect-
“ able, but yet it is unworthy of you. I
“ have it in my power, amiable stranger, to
“ procure you a happier lot; my husband’s
“ intentions agree entirely with mine. I have
“ a considerable estate at Turin: I want a
“ friend of my own sex, and I shall think I
“ bear away from this place an invaluable
“ treasure, if you will accompany me. Separate
“ from the proposal, from the suit I now make
“ you, all notion of servitude: I do not think
“ you made for that condition; but though
“ my prepossessions in your favour should de-
“ ceive me, I had rather raise you above your
“ birth, than leave you beneath it. I repeat
“ to you, it is a friend of my own sex that I
“ want to attach to me. For the rest, be under
“ no concern for the fate of these good people:
“ there is nothing which I would not do to
“ make them amends for your loss; at least
“ they shall have wherewith to spend the re-
“ mainder of their lives happily, according to
“ their condition; and it is from your hand
“ that they shall receive the benefits I intend
“ them.”

“ them.” The old folks, who were present at this discourse, kissing the hands of the Marchioness, and throwing themselves at her feet, begged the young *incognita* to accept of these generous offers: they represented to her with tears, that they were on the brink of the grave; that she had no other consolation than to make them happy in their old age; and that at their death, when left to herself, their habitation would become a dreadful solitude. The shepherdess, embracing them, mingled her tears with theirs; she returned thanks to the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose for their goodness, with a sensibility that made her still more beautiful. “ I cannot,” said she, “ accept of your courtesies. Heaven “ has marked out my place, and its will is accomplished; but your goodness has made “ impressions on my soul which will never be “ effaced. The respectable name of Fonrose “ shall ever be present to my imagination. “ I have but one favour more to ask you,” said she, blushing, and looking down, “ that “ is, to be so good as to bury this adventure “ in eternal silence, and to leave the world “ for ever ignorant of the lot of an unknown “ wretch, who wants to live and die in oblivion.” The Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose, moved with pity and grief, redoubled a thousand times their instances: she was
 immoveable,

64 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,
immoveable, and the old people, the travellers,
and the shepherdes, separated with tears in their
eyes.

During the journey the Marquis and his lady were taken up with nothing but this adventure. They thought they had been in a dream. Their imaginations being filled with this kind of romance, they arrive at Turin. It may easily be imagined that they did not keep silence, and this was an inexhaustible subject for reflections and conjectures. The young Fonrose, being present at these discourses, lost not one circumstance. He was at that age wherein the imagination is most lively, and the heart most susceptible; but he was one of those characters whose sensibility displays not itself outwardly, and who are so much the more violently agitated, when they are so at all, as the sentiment which affects them does not weaken itself by any sort of dissipation. All that Fonrose hears said of the charms, virtues, and misfortunes of the shepherdes of Savoy, kindles in his soul the most ardent desire of seeing her. He forms to himself an image of her, which is always present to him. He compares her to every thing that he sees, and every thing that he sees vanishes before her. But the more his impatience redoubles, the more care he takes to conceal it. Turin becomes odious to him. The valley
which

which conceals from the world its brightest ornament, attracts his whole soul. It is there that happiness waits him. But if his project is known, he foresees the greatest obstacles: they will never consent to the journey he meditates; it is the folly of a young man, the consequences of which they will be apprehensive of; the shepherdess herself, affrighted at his pursuits, will not fail to withdraw herself from them; he loses her, if he should be known. After all these reflexions, which employed his thoughts for three months, he takes a resolution to quit every thing for her sake; to go, under the habit of a shepherd, to seek her in her solitude, and to die there, or draw her out of it.

He disappears; they see him no more. His parents become alarmed at his absence: their fear increases every day: their expectations disappointed throw the whole family into affliction: the fruitlessness of their enquiries completes their despair; a duel, an assassination, every thing that is most unfortunate, presents itself to their imagination; and these unhappy parents ended their researches by lamenting the death of their son, their only hope. While his family are in mourning, Fonrose, under the habit of a shepherd, presents himself to the inhabitants of the hamlets adjoining to the valley, which they had
but

but too well described to him. His ambition is accomplished: they trust him with the care of their flocks.

The first days after his arrival, he left them to wander at random, solely attentive to discover the places to which the shepherdes led hers.

“ Let us manage,” said he, “ the timidity
 “ of this solitary fair-one: if she is unfor-
 “ tunate, her heart has need of consolation;
 “ if it be nothing but a desire to banish her-
 “ self from the world; and the pleasure of a
 “ tranquill and innocent life, that retains her
 “ here, she will feel some dull moments, and
 “ wish for company to amuse or console her.
 “ If I succeed so far as to render that agree-
 “ able to her, she will soon find it necessary;
 “ then I shall take counsel from the situation
 “ of her soul. After all, we are here alone,
 “ as it were, in the world, and we shall be
 “ every thing to each other. From confi-
 “ dence to friendship the passage is not long,
 “ and from friendship to love, at our age, the
 “ road is still easier.” And what was Fonrose’s
 age when he reasoned thus? Fonrose was
 eighteen; but three months reflexion on
 the same object unfolds a number of ideas!
 While he was thus giving himself up to his
 imagination, with his eyes wandering over
 the country, he hears at a distance that voice,
 the

the charms of which had been so often extolled to him. The emotion it excited in him was as lively as if she had been unexpected. "It is here," said the shepherdess in her plaintive strains, "it is here that my heart enjoys the only happiness that remains to it. My grief has a luxury in it for my soul; I prefer its bitterness to the deceitful sweets of joy." These accents rent the sensible heart of Fonrose. "What," said he, "can be the cause of the chagrin that consumes her? How pleasing would it be to console her!" A hope still more pleasing presumed, not without difficulty, to flatter his desires. He feared to alarm the shepherdess if he resigned himself imprudently to his impatience of seeing her near, and for the first time it was sufficient to have heard her. The next day he went out again to lead his sheep to pasture; and after observing the route which she had taken, he placed himself at the foot of a rock, which the day before repeated to him the sounds of that touching voice. I forgot to mention that Fonrose, to the handsomest figure had joined those talents which the young nobility of Italy do not neglect. He played on the hautboy like Befuzzi, of whom he had taken his lessons, and who formed at that time the delight of Europe. Adelaïde, buried in her own afflicting ideas, had not yet made
her

68 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,

her voice heard, and the echoes kept silence. All on a sudden this silence was interrupted by the plaintive sounds of Fonrose's hautboy. These unknown sounds excited in the soul of Adelaïde a surprise mingled with anxiety. The keepers of the flocks that wandered on the hills had never caused her to hear aught before but the sounds of rustick pipes. Immoveable and attentive, she seeks with her eyes who it was that could form such harmonious sounds. She perceives, at a distance, a young shepherd seated in the cavity of a rock, at the foot of which he fed his flock; she draws near, to hear him the better. "See," said she, "what the mere instinct of nature can do! "The ear teaches this shepherd all the refinements of the art. Can any one breathe purer sounds? What delicacy in his inflexions! what variety in his gradations! "Who can say after this, that taste is not a gift of nature?" Ever since Adelaïde had dwelled in this solitude, this was the first time that her grief, suspended by an agreeable distraction, had delivered up her soul to the sweet emotion of pleasure. Fonrose, who saw her approach, and seat herself at the foot of a willow to hear him, pretended not to perceive her. He seized, without seeming to affect it, the moment of her retreat, and managed the course of his own flock in such a manner

manner as to meet her on the declivity of a hill, where the roads crossed. He cast only one look on her, and continued his route, as if taken up with nothing but the care of his flock. But what beauties had that one look ran over! What eyes! what a divine mouth! How much more ravishing still would those features be, which are so noble and touching in their languor, if love reanimated them! He saw plainly that grief alone had withered in their spring the roses on her lovely cheeks; but of so many charms, that which had moved him most was the noble elegance of her person and her gait; in the ease of her motions he thought he saw a young cedar, whose straight and flexible trunk yields gently to the zephyrs. This image, which love had just engraven in flaming characters on his memory, took up all his thoughts. "How feebly," said he, "have they painted to me this beauty unknown to the world, whose adoration she merits! And it is a desert that she inhabits! and it is thatch that covers her! She who ought to see kings at her feet, employs herself in tending an humble flock! Beneath what garments has she presented herself to my view? She adorns every thing, and nothing disfigures her. Yet what a life for a frame so delicate! Coarse food, a savage climate, a bed of straw,

" great

70 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,

“ great gods! And for whom are the roses
 “ made? Yes, I will draw her out of this
 “ state, so much too hard and too unworthy
 “ of her.” Sleep interrupted his reflexions,
 but effaced not her image. Adelaïde, on her
 side, sensibly struck with the youth, the beauty
 of Fonrose, ceased not to admire the caprices
 of Fortune. “ Where is Nature going,” said
 she, “ to reassemble together so many talents
 “ and so many graces! But, alas! those
 “ gifts, which to him are here but useless,
 “ would be perhaps his misfortune in a more
 “ elevated state. What evils does not beauty
 “ create in the world! Unhappy as I am!
 “ is it for me to set any value on it?” This
 melancholy reflexion began to poison in her
 soul the pleasure she had tasted; she reproached
 herself for having been sensible of it, and re-
 solved to deny it herself for the future. The
 next day Fonrose thought he perceived that
 she avoided his approach; he fell into a pro-
 found melancholy. “ Could she suspect my
 “ disguise?” said he. “ Should I have be-
 “ trayed it myself?” This uneasiness pos-
 sessed him all the live-long day, and his haut-
 boy was neglected. Adelaïde was not so far
 but she could easily have heard it; and his
 silence astonished her. She began to sing her-
 self. “ It seems,” said the song, “ that every
 “ thing around me partakes of my heaviness:

“ The

A MORAL TALE. 71

“ The birds send forth none but sorrowfull
“ notes, Echo replies to me in complaints,
“ the zephyrs moan amidst these leaves, the
“ sound of the brooks imitates my sighs, one
“ might say that they flowed with tears.”
Fonrose, softened by these strains, could not
help replying to them. Never was concert
more moving than that of his hautboy with
Adelaïde’s voice. “ O heaven,” said she,
“ it is enchantment ! I dare not believe my
“ ears : it is not a shepherd, it is a god whom
“ I have heard. Can the natural sense of
“ harmony inspire such concord of sounds ?”
While she was speaking thus, a rural, or ra-
ther a celestial melody made the valley re-
sound. Adelaïde thought she saw those pro-
diges realising which Poetry attributes to her
sprightly sister Musick. Astonished, con-
founded, she knew not whether she ought to
take herself away, or resign herself up to this
enchantment. But she perceived the shepherd,
whom she had just heard, reassembling his
flock in order to regain his hut. “ He knows
“ not,” says she, “ the delight he diffuses
“ around him ; his undisguised soul is not
“ in the least vain of it : he waits not
“ even for the praises I owe him. Such is
“ the power of musick : it is the only talent
“ that places its happiness in itself ; all the
“ others require witnesses. This gift of
“ heaven

72 The SHEPHERDESS of the ALPS,

“ heaven was granted to man in his innocence: it is the purest of all pleasures. Alas! it is the only one I still relish, and I consider this shepherd as a new echo who is come to answer to my grief.”

The following days Fonrose affected to keep at a distance in his turn: Adelaïde was afflicted at it. “ Chance,” said she, “ seemed to have procured me this feeble consolation; I gave myself up to it too easily, and to punish me, she has deprived me of it.” At last, one day when they happened to meet on the declivity of the hill, “ Shepherd,” said she to him, “ are you leading your flocks far off?” These first words of Adelaïde caused an emotion in Fonrose, which almost deprived him of the use of his voice. “ I do not know,” said he hesitating; “ it is not I who lead my flock, but my flock that leads me; these places are better known to it than to me: I leave to it the choice of the best pastures.” “ Whence are you then?” said the shepherdess to him. “ I was born beyond the Alps,” replied Fonrose. “ Were you born among shepherds?” continued she. “ As I am a shepherd,” said he looking down, “ I must have been born to be one.” “ I doubt it,” replied Adelaïde, viewing him with attention. “ Your talents, your language, your very air, all tell me, that

“ that fate had placed you in a better situation.” “ You are very obliging,” said Fonrose; “ but ought you, of all persons, “ to believe that Nature refuses every thing “ to shepherds? Were you born to be a “ queen?” Adelaïde blushed at this answer; and changing the subject, “ The other “ day,” said she, “ by the sound of a hautboy “ you accompanied my songs with an art that “ would be a prodigy in a simple shepherd.” “ It is your voice that is so,” replied Fonrose, “ in a simple shepherdes.”—“ But has no “ body instructed you?”—“ I have, like “ yourself, no other guides than my heart and “ my ear. You sung, I was melted; what “ my heart feels, my hautboy expresses; I “ breathe my soul into it. This is the whole “ of my secret; nothing in the world is “ easier.” “ That is incredible,” said Adelaïde. “ I said the very same on hearing you,” replied Fonrose; “ but I was forced to believe it. What will you say? Nature and “ love sometimes take a delight in assembling “ their most precious gifts in persons of the “ most humble fortune, to show that there is “ no condition which they cannot ennoble.” During this discourse, they advanced towards the valley; and Fonrose, whom a ray of hope now animated, began to make the air resound with those sprightly notes which pleasure in-

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spires. “ Ah! prithee now,” said Adelaïde,
“ spare my soul the troublesome image of a
“ sentiment which she cannot relish. This
“ solitude is consecrated to grief; her echoes
“ are not used to repeat the accents of a pro-
“ fane joy; here every thing groans in con-
“ cert with me.” “ I also have cause to com-
“ plain,” replied the young man; and these
words, pronounced with a sigh, were followed
by a long silence. “ You have cause to com-
“ plain!” replied Adelaïde: “ is it of man-
“ kind? is it of fortune?” “ No matter,”
said he; “ but I am not happy; ask me no
“ more.” “ Hear me,” said Adelaïde: “ heaven
“ gives us to each other as a consolation in
“ our troubles; mine are like an overwhelm-
“ ing load, which weighs down my heart.
“ Whoever you may be, if you know misfor-
“ tune, you ought to be compassionate, and
“ I believe you worthy of my confidence;
“ but promise me that it shall be mutual.”
“ Alas!” said Fonrose, “ my misfortunes are
“ such, that I shall perhaps be condemned
“ never to reveal them.” This mystery but
redoubled the curiosity of Adelaïde. “ Repair
“ to-morrow,” said she to him, “ to the foot
“ of that hill, beneath that old tufted oak,
“ where you have heard me moan. There I
“ will teach you things that will excite your
“ pity.” Fonrose passed the night in the ut-
most

most emotion. His fate depended on what he was going to hear. A thousand alarming ideas agitated him by turns. He dreaded, above all, the being driven to despair by the communication of an unsuccessful and faithful love. "If she is in love," said he, "I am undone."

He repairs to the appointed place. He sees Adelaïde arrive. The day was overcast with clouds, and Nature, mourning, seemed to forebode the sadness of their conversation. As soon as they were seated at the foot of the oak, Adelaïde spoke thus. "You see these stones
 " which the grass begins to cover; they are
 " the tomb of the most tender, the most vir-
 " tuous of men, whom my love and my im-
 " prudence have cost his life. I am a French
 " woman, of a family of distinction, and, to
 " my misfortune, too rich. The Count
 " d'Orestan conceived the tenderest passion
 " for me; I was sensible to it, sensible to
 " excess. My parents opposed the inclina-
 " tion of our hearts, and my frantick passion
 " made me consent to a marriage sacred to
 " virtuous souls, but disallowed by the laws.
 " Italy was at that time the theatre of war.
 " My husband went thither to join the corps
 " which he was to command: I followed him
 " as far as Briançon: my foolish tenderness
 " retained him there two days, in spite of
 " himself: for he, a young man, full of ho-
 " nour,

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“nour, prolonged his stay there with the
 “greatest reluctance. He sacrificed his duty
 “to me: but what would not I have sacrificed
 “to him? In a word, I required it of him;
 “and he could not withstand my tears. He
 “took leave with a foreboding, which alarm-
 “ed me: I accompanied him as far as this
 “valley, where I received his adieus; and in
 “order to wait to hear from him, I returned
 “to Briançon. A few days after, a report
 “was spread of a battle. I doubted whether
 “d’Orestan had got thither; I wished it for
 “his honour, I dreaded it for my love, when
 “I received a letter from him, which I
 “thought very consoling! “I shall be such a
 “day, at such an hour,” said he, “in the
 “valley, and under the oak where we parted;
 “I shall repair there alone; I conjure you to
 “go there, and expect me likewise alone; I
 “live yet but for you.” “How great was
 “my mistake! I perceived in this billet
 “nothing more than an impatience to see me
 “again, and this impatience made me happy.
 “I repaired then to this very oak. D’Orestan
 “arrives, and, after the tenderest reception,
 “You would have it so, my dear Adelaïde,”
 said he; “I have failed in my duty at the most
 “important moment of my life. What I
 “feared is come to pass. A battle has hap-
 “pened; my regiment charged; it performed
 “prodigies

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“ prodigies of valour, and I was not there. I
 “ am dishonoured, lost without resource. I re-
 “ proach not you with my misfortune; but I
 “ have now but one sacrifice more to make
 “ you, and my heart is come to accomplish it.”
 “ At this discourse, pale, trembling, and
 “ scarce breathing, I took my husband into
 “ my arms. I felt my blood congeal in my
 “ veins, my knees bent under me, and I fell
 “ down senseless. He availed himself of my
 “ fainting to tear himself from my bosom,
 “ and in a little time I was recalled to life by
 “ the report of a shot, which killed him. I
 “ will not describe to you the situation I was
 “ in; it is inexpressible; and the tears which
 “ you now see flowing, the sighs that stifle
 “ my voice, are but a feeble image of it. Af-
 “ ter passing the whole night beside his bloody
 “ corpse, in a grief that stupefied me, my
 “ first care was, to bury along with him my
 “ shame: my hands dug out his grave. I
 “ seek not to move you; but the moment in
 “ which the earth was to separate me from
 “ the sorrowfull remains of my husband, was
 “ a thousand times more dreadful to me than
 “ that can be which is to separate my body
 “ from my soul. Spent with grief, and de-
 “ prived of nourishment, my enfeebled hands
 “ took up two whole days in hollowing out

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“ this tomb with inconceivable labour. When
 “ my strength forsook me, I reposed myself
 “ on the livid and cold bosom of my husband.
 “ In short, I paid him the rites of sepulture,
 “ and my heart promised him to wait in these
 “ parts till death reunites us. In the mean
 “ time, cruel hunger began to devour my
 “ exhausted entrails. I thought it criminal to
 “ refuse nature the supports of a life more
 “ grievous than death. I changed my gar-
 “ ments for the plain habit of a shepherdess,
 “ and I embraced that condition as my only
 “ refuge. From that time my only consol-
 “ ation has been to come here, and weep over
 “ this grave, which shall be my own. You
 “ see,” continued she, “ with what sincerity
 “ I open my soul to you. With you I may
 “ henceforth weep at liberty; it is a conso-
 “ lation I had need of; but I expect the same
 “ confidence from you. Do not think that
 “ you have deceived me. I see clearly, that
 “ the state of a shepherd is as foreign, and
 “ newer to you than to me. You are young,
 “ perhaps sensible; and, if I may believe my
 “ conjectures, our misfortunes have the same
 “ source, and you have loved as well as I.
 “ We shall only feel the more for one another.
 “ I consider you as a friend, whom heaven,
 “ touched by my misfortunes, deigns to send
 “ me in my solitude. Do you also consider
 “ me

“ me as a friend, capable of giving you,
 “ if not salutary counsel, at least a consolatory
 “ example.”

“ You pierce my very soul,” said Fonrose, overcome with what he had just heard; “ and
 “ whatever sensibility you may attribute to
 “ me, you are very far from conceiving the
 “ impression that the recital of you misfor-
 “ tunes has made on me. Alas! why cannot
 “ I return it with that confidence which you
 “ testify towards me, and of which you are
 “ so worthy? But I warned you of it; I
 “ foresaw it. Such is the nature of my sor-
 “ rows, that an eternal silence must shut
 “ them up in the bottom of my heart. You
 “ are very unhappy,” added he with a pro-
 found sigh: “ I am still more unhappy:
 “ this is all I can tell you. Be not offended
 “ at my silence; it is terrible to me to be
 “ condemned to it. The constant companion
 “ of all your steps, I will soften your labours,
 “ I will partake of all your griefs: I will see
 “ you weep over this grave, I will mingle my
 “ tears with yours. You shall not repent
 “ having deposited your woes in a heart, alas!
 “ but too sensible.” “ I repent me of it from
 “ this moment,” said she with confusion; and
 both, with downcast eyes, retired in silence
 from each other. Adelaïde, on quitting Fon-
 rose, thought she saw in his countenance the

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impression of a profound grief. “ I have re-
“ vived,” said she, “ the sense of his sorrows;
“ and what must be their horror, when he
“ thinks himself still more wretched than I !”

From that day more signing and more conversation followed between Fonrose and Adelaïde. They neither sought nor avoided one another : looks of consternation formed almost their only language ; if he found her weeping over the grave of her husband, his heart seized with pity, jealousy and grief, he contemplated her in silence, and answered her sighs with deep groans.

Two months had passed away in this painful situation, and Adelaïde saw Fonrose’s youth wither as a flower. The sorrow which consumed him afflicted her so much the more deeply, as the cause of it was unknown to her. She had not the most distant suspicion that she was the object of it. However, as it is natural, when two sentiments divide a soul, for one to weaken the other, Adelaïde’s regret on account of the death of d’Orestan became less lively every day, in proportion as she delivered herself up to the pity with which Fonrose inspired her. She was very sure that this pity had nothing but what was innocent in it ; it did not even come into her head to defend herself from it ; and the object of this generous sentiment being continually present
to

to her view, awakened it every instant. The languor into which this young man was fallen became such, that she thought it her duty not to leave him any longer to himself. “ You are dying,” said she to him, “ and you add to my griefs that of seeing you consumed with sorrow under my eye, without being able to apply any remedy. If the recital of the imprudences of my youth has not inspired you with a contempt for me; if the purest and tenderest friendship be dear to you; in short, if you would not render me more unhappy than I was before I knew you, confide to me the cause of your griefs: you have no person in the world but myself to assist you in supporting them: your secret, though it were more important than mine, fear not that I shall divulge. The death of my husband has placed a gulf betwixt the world and me; and the confidence which I require will soon be buried in this grave, to which grief is with slow steps conducting me.” “ I hope to go before you,” said Fonrose, bursting into tears. Suffer me to finish my deplorable life without leaving you afterwards the reproach of having shortened its course.”—“ O heaven, what do I hear!” cried she with distraction. “ What, I, can I have contributed to the evils which overwhelm you? Go on, you pierce my soul.

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“ What have I done? what have I said ! Alas,
 “ I tremble ! Good heaven ! hast thou sent me
 “ into the world only to create wretches ?
 “ Speak, nay, speak ! you must no longer
 “ conceal who you are ; you have said too much
 “ to dissemble any longer.” — “ Well then, I
 “ am I am Fonrose, the son of those
 “ travellers whom you filled with admiration
 “ and respect. All that they related of your
 “ virtues and your charms inspired me with
 “ the fatal design of coming to see you in this
 “ disguise. I have left my family in the deep-
 “ est sorrow, thinking they have lost me, and
 “ lamenting my death. I have seen you, I
 “ know what attaches you to this place, I
 “ know that the only hope that is left me is
 “ to die here adoring you. Give me no use-
 “ less counsel or unjust reproaches. My
 “ resolution is as firm, as immoveable as your
 “ own. If, in betraying my secret, you dis-
 “ turb the last moments of a life almost at an
 “ end, you will to no purpose injure me,
 “ who would never offend you.”

Adelaide, confounded, endeavoured to calm
 the despair into which this young man was
 plunged. “ Let me,” said she, “ do to his
 “ parents the service of restoring him to life ;
 “ let me save their only hope : heaven pre-
 “ sents me with this opportunity of acknow-
 “ ledging

“ledging their favours.” Thus, far from making him furious by a misplaced rigour, all the tendernefs of pity, and consolation of friendship, was put in practice in order to sooth him.

“Heavenly angel,” cried Fonrose, “I see all the reluctance that you feel to make any one unhappy: your heart is with him who reposes in this grave; I see that nothing can detach you from him, I see how ingenious your virtue is to conceal your woe from me; I perceive it in all its extent, I am overwhelmed by it, but I pardon you: it is your duty never to love me, it is mine ever to adore you.”

Impatient of executing the design which she had conceived, Adelaïde arrives at her hut. “Father,” said she to her old master, “do you think you have strength to travel to Turin? I have need of somebody whom I can trust, to give the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose the most interesting intelligence.”

The old man replied, that his zeal to serve them inspired him with courage. “Go,” resumed Adelaïde; “you will find them bewailing the death of their only son; tell them that he is living, and in these parts, and that I will restore him to them; but that there is an indispensable necessity for their coming here themselves to fetch him.”

He

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He sets out, arrives at Turin, sends in his address as the old man of the valley of Savoy. "Ah!" cried Madam de Fonrose, "some misfortune perhaps has happened to our shepherdess." "Let him come in," added the Marquis, "he will tell us perhaps that she consents to live with us." "After the loss of my son," said the Marchioness, "it is the only comfort I can taste in this world." The old man is introduced. He throws himself at their feet: they raise him. "You are lamenting the death of your son," said he; "I come to tell you that he lives: our dear child that has discovered him in the valley: she sends me to inform you of it; but yourselves only, she says, can bring him back." As he spoke this, surprise and joy deprived the Marchioness of Fonrose of her senses. The Marquis, distracted and amazed, calls out for help for his lady, recalls her to life, embraces the old man, publishes to the whole house that their son is restored to them. The Marchioness resuming her spirits, "What shall we do?" said she, taking the old man by the hands, and pressing them with tenderness, "what shall we do in gratitude for this benefit, which restores life to us?"

Every thing is ordered for their departure. They set out with the good man; they travel

travel night and day, and repair to the valley, where their only good awaits them. The shepherdess was out at pasture: the old woman conducts them to her; they approach. How great is their surprise! their son, that well-beloved son, is by her side in the habit of a simple shepherd. Their hearts sooner than their eyes acknowledge him. "Ah! cruel child," cried his mother, throwing herself into his arms, "what sorrow have you occasioned us! why withdraw yourself from our tenderness? and what is it you come here for?" "To adore," said he, "what you yourself admired." "Pardon me, Madam," said Adelaïde, while Fonrose embraced his father's knees, who raised him with kindness; "pardon me for having left you so long in grief: if I had known it sooner, you should have been sooner consoled." After the first emotions of nature, Fonrose relapsed into the deepest affliction. "Let us go," said the Marquis, "let us go rest ourselves in the hut, and forget all the pain that this young madman has occasioned us." "Yes, Sir, I have been mad," said Fonrose to his father, who led him by the hand: "nothing but the loss of my reason could have suspended in my heart the emotions of nature, so as to make me forget the most sacred duties; in short, to detach myself from every thing

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“ thing that I held dearest in the world; but
 “ this madness you gave birth to, and I am
 “ but too severely punished for it. I love
 “ without hope the most accomplished person
 “ in the world: you see nothing, you know
 “ nothing of this incomparable woman: she
 “ is honesty, sensibility, virtue itself: I love
 “ her even to idolatry, I cannot be happy
 “ without her, and I know that she cannot be
 “ mine.” “ Has she confided to you,” said
 the Marquis, “ the secret of her birth?” “ I
 “ have learned enough of it,” said Fonrose,
 “ to assure you, that it is in no respect be-
 “ neath my own; she has even renounced a
 “ considerable fortune to bury herself in this
 “ desert.”—“ And do you know what has
 “ induced her to it?”—“ Yes, Sir; but it
 “ is a secret which she alone can reveal to
 “ you.”—“ She is married, perhaps?”—
 “ She is a widow; but her heart is not the
 “ more disengaged; her ties are but too strong.”
 “ Daughter,” said the Marquis, on entering
 the hut, “ you see that you turn the heads of
 “ the whole family of Fonrose. The extra-
 “ vagant passion of this young man cannot be
 “ justified but by such a prodigy as you are.
 “ All my wife’s wishes are confined to having
 “ you for a companion, and a friend: this
 “ child here will not live unless he obtains
 “ you for his wife; I desire no less to have
 “ you

“ you for my daughter : see how many per-
 “ sons you will make unhappy by a refusal.”
 “ Ah! Sir,” said she, “ your goodness con-
 “ founds me ; but hear and judge for me.”
 Then Adelaïde, in the presence of the old
 man and his wife, made a recital of her deplo-
 rable adventure. She added the name of her
 family, which was not unknown to the Mar-
 quis de Fonrose, and ended by calling on
 himself to witness the inviolable fidelity she
 owed her spouse. At these words, conster-
 nation spread itself over every countenance.
 Young Fonrose, choaked with sobs, threw him-
 self into a corner of the hut, in order to give
 them free scope. The father, moved at the
 sight, flew to the assistance of his son : “ See,”
 said he, “ my dear Adelaïde, to what a condi-
 “ tion you have reduced him.” Madam de
 Fonrose, who was near Adelaïde, pressed her in
 her arms, bathing her at the same time with her
 tears. “ Alas ! why, my daughter,” said she,
 “ why will you a second time make us mourn
 “ the death of our dear child ?” The old man
 and his wife, their eyes filled with tears, and fix-
 ed upon Adelaïde, waited her speaking. “ Hea-
 “ ven is my witness,” said Adelaïde, rising,
 “ that I would lay down my life, in gratitude for
 “ such goodness. It would heighten my mis-
 “ fortunes to have occasion to reproach my-
 “ self with yours ; but I am willing that Fon-
 “ rose

“ rose himself should be my judge: suffer
 “ me, if you please, to speak to him for a
 “ moment. Then retiring with him alone.
 “ Fonrose,” said she, “ you know what
 “ sacred ties retain me in this place. If I
 “ could cease to love and lament a husband
 “ who loved me but too well, I should be
 “ the most despicable of women. Esteem,
 “ friendship, gratitude, are the sentiments
 “ I owe you; but none of these can cancel
 “ love: the more you have conceived for
 “ me, the more you should expect from me:
 “ it is the impossibility of fulfilling that
 “ duty, that hinders my imposing it on
 “ myself. At the same time, I see you in a
 “ situation that would move the least sen-
 “ sible heart; it is shocking to me to be the
 “ cause, it would be still more shocking to me
 “ to hear your parents accuse me with having
 “ been your destruction. I will forget myself
 “ then for the present, and leave you, as far
 “ as in me lies, to be the arbiter of our des-
 “ tiny. It is for you to choose that of the two
 “ situations which appears to you least painful,
 “ either to renounce me, to subdue yourself,
 “ and forget me; or to possess a woman, whose
 “ heart, being full of another object, can only
 “ grant you sentiments too feeble to satisfy the
 “ wishes of a lover.” “ That is enough,”
 said Fonrose, “ and, in a soul like yours,
 “ friendship

“ friendship should take place of love. I shall
 “ be jealous, without doubt, of the tears which
 “ you shall bestow to the memory of another
 “ husband ; but the cause of that jealousy, in
 “ rendering you more respectable, will render
 “ you also more dear in my eyes.

“ She is mine,” said he, coming and throwing himself into the arms of his parents ; “ it
 “ is to her respect for you, to your goodness,
 “ that I owe her, and it is owing you a second
 “ life.” From that moment their arms were
 chains from which Adelaïde could not disengage herself.

Did she yield only to pity, to gratitude ? I would fain believe it, in order to admire her the more : Adelaïde believed so herself. However it be, before she set out, she would revisit the tomb, which she quitted but with regret. “ O my dear d’Orestan !” said she, “ if
 “ from the womb of the dead thou canst read
 “ the bottom of my soul, thy shade has no
 “ cause to murmur at the sacrifice I make : I
 “ owe it to the generous sentiments of this
 “ virtuous family ; but my heart remains thine
 “ for ever. I go to endeavour to make them
 “ happy, without any hope of being myself
 “ so.” It was not without some sort of violence they forced her from the place ; but she insisted that they should erect a monument there to the memory of her husband ; and
 that

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that the hut of her old master and mistress, who followed her to Turin, should be converted into a country-house, as plain as it was solitary, where she proposed to come sometimes to mourn the errors and misfortunes of her youth. Time, the assiduities of Fonrose, the fruits of her second marriage, have since opened her soul to the impressions of a new affection; and they cite her as an example of a woman remarkable, and respectable, even in her infidelity.



THE HAPPY DIVORCE.

UNEASINESS and inconstancy are, in the greatest part of mankind, nothing more than the consequence of false calculation. Too strong a prepossession in favour of the happiness we desire, makes us experience, as soon as we possess it, that uneasiness and disgust, which suffer us to relish nothing. The imagination deceived, and the heart dissatisfied, wander to new objects, the prospect of which dazzles in its turn, and the approach disabuses us.

us. Thus from illusion to illusion, life is passed away in changing the chimera: this is the malady of lively and delicate souls; nature has nothing sufficiently perfect for them: whence it proceeds that it is thought such a mighty matter to fix the taste of a pretty woman.

Lucilia, in the convent, had painted to herself the charms of love, and the delights of marriage, with the colouring of an imagination of a girl of fifteen, whose flower nothing had yet tarnished.

She had seen the world only in those ingenious fictions which are the romance of human nature. It costs nothing to an eloquent man to give love and marriage all the charms that he conceives. Lucilia, according to these pictures, saw lovers and husbands only as they are to be met with in fables, always tender and full of love, saying nothing but fine things, taken up solely with the care of pleasing, new homages, or pleasures eternally varied.

Such was the prepossession of Lucilia, when they came to draw her out of the convent to marry the Marquis de Lifere. His engaging and noble figure inspired her with a favourable opinion of him, and his first addresses succeeded in determining the irresolution of her soul. She saw not yet in the Marquis the ardour of a passionate love; but she thought modestly enough of herself not to pretend to
set

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set him on fire at first sight. This liking, tranquil at its birth, would make a rapid progress: he must have time. However, the marriage was concluded upon, and solemnised before the inclination of the Marquis was grown a violent passion.

Nothing was more steady or solid than the temper of the Marquis de Lifere. In marrying a young woman, he proposed to himself, in order to make her happy, to begin by being her friend, persuaded that an honest man does whatever he pleases with a well-disposed woman, when he has gained her confidence; and that a husband, who makes himself dreaded, invites his wife to deceive him, and authorises her to hate him.

In order to follow the plan which he had traced out to himself, it was necessary not to be a too passionate lover: passion knows no rule. He had considered well before his engagement, on the kind of liking with which Lucilia inspired him, resolved never to marry a woman, whom he should love to distraction. Lucilia found in her husband only that lively and tender friendship, that attentive and constant complaisance, that soft and pure pleasure, that love, in short, which has neither its hot nor cold fits. At first, she flattered herself that intoxication, enchantment, transports, would

would have their turn; but the soul of Lisere was unalterable.

“ This is very extraordinary,” said she;
 “ I am young, handsome, and my husband
 “ don’t love me! I am his, and he thinks it
 “ enough to possess me with coldness. But
 “ then why suffer him to be cold? Can he
 “ have any violent longings for what is in his
 “ power without reserve or trouble? He would
 “ become passionately fond of me, if he were
 “ jealous. How unjust are men! We must
 “ torment them in order to please them. Be
 “ tender, faithful, fond, they neglect, they
 “ disdain you. An even course of happiness
 “ makes them dull. Caprice, coquetry, in-
 “ constancy, rouse and enliven them: they set
 “ no value on pleasure, but in proportion to
 “ the trouble it gives them. Lisere, less sure
 “ of being beloved, will become a thousand
 “ times fonder. That is easy; let me be in
 “ the fashion. Every thing around me pre-
 “ sents me with enough to make him uneasy,
 “ if he is capable of jealousy.”

After this fine project, Lucilia gave herself up to dissipation, to coquetry; she assumed a mystery in all her proceedings; she made parties without the Marquis. “ Did I not foresee
 “ it,” said he to himself, “ that I had a wife
 “ like other women? Six months after marriage, she begins to be tired of it. I should
 “ be

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“ be a happy man now if I were passionately
 “ fond of my wife! Happily my liking and
 “ esteem for her leave me full enjoyment of
 “ my reason: I must make use of it, dissem-
 “ ble, subdue myself, and employ nothing but
 “ gentleness and soothing measures, to keep
 “ her in order. They do not always succeed,
 “ but reproaches, complaints, restraint and
 “ violence succeed still less.” The moderation,
 complaisance, and tranquillity of the Marquis,
 put Lucilia out of all patience. “ Alas!”
 said she, “ do what I will, it is all to no
 “ purpose, this man will never love me: he is
 “ one of those cold souls whom nothing moves,
 “ nothing engages, and I am condemned to
 “ pass my life with a stone that knows neither
 “ how to love, nor hate! O, the delight of
 “ sensible souls, the charm of impassioned
 “ hearts! Love, who raisest us to heaven on
 “ thy fiery pinions! where are those flaming
 “ darts, with which thou woundest happy lo-
 “ vers? where is that intoxication into which
 “ thou plungest them? where are those ravish-
 “ ing transports with which they mutually in-
 “ spire each other? Where are they?” con-
 tinued she. “ In free and independent love,
 “ in the disposal of two hearts which give a
 “ loose to themselves. And why should the
 “ Marquis be fond? What sacrifice have I
 “ made him? By what marks of courage, by
 “ what

“ what heroick devotion of myself have I
 “ moved the sensibility of his soul ! Where is
 “ the merit of having obeyed, of having ac-
 “ cepted for a husband an amiable and rich
 “ young man, chosen without my consent ?
 “ Is it for love to interfere in a marriage
 “ of convenience ? But is this then the lot
 “ of a woman of sixteen, to whom, without
 “ vanity, nature has given wherewith to please,
 “ and still more, wherewith to love ? For
 “ after all I cannot conceal from myself the
 “ graces of my figure, nor the sensibility of my
 “ heart. At sixteen to languish without hope
 “ in cold indifference, and to see at least a
 “ score of years waste away without pleasure,
 “ which might have been delicious ! I say a
 “ score at least, and it is not desiring to tire
 “ the world, to be content to renounce it be-
 “ fore forty years of age. Cruel family ! was
 “ it for you that I took a husband ? You chose
 “ me an honest man ; a rare present you made
 “ me ! To be dull with an honest man, and
 “ to be dull all one’s life ! very hard, in-
 “ deed !”

This discontent soon degenerated into
 peevishness, and Lisere thought he perceived
 at last, that she had taken an aversion to
 him. His friends displeased her, their com-
 pany became troublesome to her, she re-
 ceived them with a coolness sufficient to keep

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them at a distance. The Marquis could no longer dissemble. "Madam," said he to Lucilia, "the end of marriage is to make people happy; we are not so, and it is in vain to pique ourselves on a constancy which restrains us. Our fortune puts us in a condition of doing without each other, and of resuming that liberty of which we imprudently made a mutual sacrifice. Live by yourself, I will live by myself. I ask towards me only that decency and regard which you owe to yourself." "With all my heart, Sir," replied Lucilia with the coldness of disgust; and from that moment every thing was settled, that Madam might have her equipage, her table, her domesticks, in one word, a separate maintenance.

Lucilia's suppers soon became ranked among the most brilliant in Paris. Her company was sought by all the handsome women and men of gallantry. But there was a necessity for Lucilia's having some particular, and he who should engage her first, it was observed, had the only hard task! In the mean time she enjoyed the homages of a brilliant set; and her heart, yet irresolute, seemed to suspend her choice only to render it more flattering. She thought at last she saw the person who would determine it. At the approach of the Count de Blamzé, all other pretenders lowered their tone. He was,
of

of the whole court, the most to be dreaded by a young woman. It was agreed, that there was no resisting him, and so they spared themselves the trouble. He was beautifull as the day, presented himself with grace, spoke little, but extremely well; and if he said common things, he rendered them interesting by the most pleasing sound of voice, and the most beautifull look in the world. They could not say that Blamzé was a fop, his foppery had so much dignity. A modest haughtiness formed his character; he decided with the gentlest air in the world, and the most Laconic tone: he listened to contradictions with good-humour, replied to them only with a smile; and if they pressed him to explain himself, he smiled still and kept silence, or repeated what he had said before. Never did he combat the opinion of another, never did he take any trouble to give a reason for his own: it was the most attentive politeness, and the most decisive presumption, that had ever yet been united in a young man of quality.

This assurance had something commanding in it, which rendered him the oracle of taste, and the legislatour of fashion. They were never sure of being right in the choice of a suit, or the colour of a carriage, 'till Blamzé had approved it by a glance. *It is excellent, it is handsome,* were the precious words from his mouth; and his silence a dead warrant. The despotism

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of his opinion extended even over beauty, talents, wit and graces. In a circle of women, she whom he had honoured with a particular attention was that instant in vogue.

Blamzé's reputation had gone before him to Lucilia's; but the deference which even his rivals paid him, redoubled the esteem she had conceived for him. She was dazzled with his beauty, and still more surprised at his modesty. He presented himself with the most respectful air, seated himself in the lowest place, but all looks were soon directed towards him. His dress was the model of taste: all the young people who surrounded him studied it with a scrupulous attention. His laces, his embroidery, his manner of dressing his head, were all examined: they wrote down the names of his tradespeople and workmen. "It is strange," said they, "we see these designs, these colours, "no where else." Blamzé confessed modestly that it cost him very little trouble. "Industry," said he, "is at its highest perfection; you "need but to enlighten and direct it." He took a pinch of snuff as he said these words, and his box excited new curiosity; it was, however, the work of a young artist whom Blamzé had drawn from his obscurity. They asked him the price of every thing; he replied with a smile, that he knew the price of none of them; and the women whispered in each other's

ear

ear the name of the female who took these matters under her care.

“ I am ashamed, Madam,” said Blamzé to Lucilia, “ that these trifles should engage the
 “ attention which ought to centre in a more
 “ interesting object. Pardon me if I listen to
 “ the frivolous questions of these young men :
 “ never did complaisance cost me so dear. I
 “ hope,” added he in a low voice, “ that
 “ you will permit me to come and make my-
 “ self amends in some more tranquill moment.”
 “ I shall be very glad to see you,” replied Lucilia blushing; and by her blushes, and the tender smile with which Blamzé accompanied a most respectfull bow, the assembly judged that it would not be long before matters came to a conclusion. Lucilia, who did not see the consequence of a few words said in her ear, and who did not think that she had made an assignation, scarce paid any attention to the meaning looks which the women cast on each other, or the light raileries which escaped the men. She delivered herself up insensibly to her own reflexions, and was quite grave the whole evening. They often turned the conversation on Blamzé; all the company spoke well of him: his rivals talked of him with esteem; Lucilia’s rivals spoke of him with complaisance. Nobody was more genteel, more gallant, more respectfull, and of twenty wo-

men, on whose account he had reason to pride himself, not one had any reason to complain. Lucilia became attentive: nothing escaped her: “Twenty women!” said she within herself, “that is much: but where is the wonder?” “He seeks one who may be worthy to fix him, and capable of fixing herself.”

She hoped the next day that he would come early, and before the crowd of visitors: she waited for him, she grew uneasy, he never came, she was out of temper; he writ, she read his billet, and her ill-humour ceased. He was distracted to lose the most agreeable moments of his life. Some impertinents had broke in upon him, he would have made his escape; but these impertinents were people of rank. It was not in his power to be happy ’till the next day; but he beseeched Lucilia to receive him early, “to abridge,” said he, “by a few hours, the cruel weariness of absence.” The company came as usual, and Lucilia received them with a coldness at which they were piqued. “We shall not have Blamzé this evening,” said Clarissa with a disconsolate air; “he goes to sup at Araminta’s little box.” At these words Lucilia turned pale, and the gaiety which reigned around her only served to redouble the grief which she endeavoured to dissemble. Her first emotion was, not to see the perfidious man more. But Clarissa wanted, perhaps,

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perhaps, either out of malice or jealousy, to impute a wrong to him of which he was not guilty. It was after all engaging herself to nothing, to see him once more; and before condemning him, it was but just to hear him.

While she was yet at her toilette, Blamzé arrives in an undress, but the most elegant undress in the world. Lucilia was a little surprised to see a man whom she scarce knew appear in a deshabille; yet if he had given himself time to dress, perhaps she would have been sorry for it. But he said so many handsome things to her on the freshness of her complexion, the beauty of her hair, the brilliancy of her morning appearance, that she had not the courage to complain. However, Araminta did not go out of her head; but it would not have been decent to appear jealous so soon; and one reproach might betray her. She contented herself with asking him what he had done with himself the evening before.—“ What did I do with my-
“ self! do I know myself? O, how trouble-
“ some the world is! How happy are we in
“ being forgotten and far from the crowd, in
“ being devoted to one’s self, and the person
“ we love! Follow my advice, Lucilia, get
“ out of this whirlwind: the more repose,
“ the more liberty as soon as we give ourselves
“ up to it. Now I have mentioned the whirl-
“ wind, what do you do with all these young

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“ fellows who pay court to you? They dispute
 “ with each other the conquest of you: have
 “ you vouchsafed to make a choice?” The
 easy familiarity of Blamzé had at first astonished
 Lucilia; this question entirely confounded her.
 “ I am impertinent, perhaps?” resumed Blamze,
 who perceived it. “ Not at all,” replied Lu-
 cilia with gentleness; “ I have nothing to
 “ conceal, and I am not afraid that any body
 “ should see through me. I amuse myself with
 “ the levity of these giddy young fellows, but
 “ not one of them seems to me worthy of a
 “ serious attachment.” Blamzé spoke of his
 rivals with indulgence, and thought that Lu-
 cilia judged too severely of them. “ Cleon,
 “ for example,” said he, “ has something
 “ very amiable in him; he knows nothing as
 “ yet; it is a pity, for he speaks well enough
 “ of things which he is ignorant of, and he is
 “ a proof to me that with wit one may dispense
 “ with common sense. Clairfont is a coxcomb,
 “ but it is the first fire of his age, and he only
 “ wants to be disciplined by a woman who has
 “ seen life. Pomblac’s disposition pronounces
 “ him a man of sentiment, and that simplicity
 “ which looks so like silliness, would please
 “ me well enough if I were a woman: some
 “ coquette will make her advantage of him.
 “ Little Linval is conceited, but when he has
 “ been

“ been supplanted five or six times, people will
 “ not be surprised to see him grown modest. At
 “ present,” continued Blamzé, “ none of all
 “ these will suit you; we behold you, there-
 “ fore, free: what use do you make of your
 “ freedom?” “ I endeavour to enjoy it,”
 replied Lucilia. “ That is mere childish-
 “ ness,” resumed the Count; “ we never
 “ enjoy our freedom but in the moment when
 “ we renounce it; and we ought not to pre-
 “ serve it with care, but in order to lose it at
 “ a proper opportunity. You are young,
 “ you are handsome, do not flatter yourself
 “ with being long disengaged: if you will not
 “ resign your heart, it will resign itself; but
 “ among those who may pretend to it, it is of
 “ importance to make a right choice. As
 “ soon as you love, and even when you do not
 “ love, you will be beloved infallibly: that is
 “ not the point; but at your age women have
 “ need of finding in a lover a counsellour, a
 “ guide, a friend, a man formed by the custom
 “ of the world, and able to enlighten you in
 “ respect of the dangers you are going to run
 “ in it.” “ A man, like yourself, for exam-
 “ ple,” said Lucilia, in an ironical tone, and
 with a sneering smile. “ Yes indeed,” con-
 tinued Blamzé, “ I should do pretty well
 “ for your purpose, were it not for all this
 “ multitude that besieges me; but how to dis-

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“engage myself from it?” “Why do not dis-
 “engage yourself from it at all,” replied Lu-
 cilia: “you would excite too many complaints
 “and make me too many enemies.” “As to
 “complaints,” said the Count coldly, “I
 “am accustomed to them. As to enemies,
 “one never gives one’s self the least concern
 “about them when one has cause to be satis-
 “fied, and the good sense to live for one’s
 “self.” “At my age,” said Lucilia smiling,
 “we are still too timorous; and though there
 “were nothing further to experience in it than
 “the despair of an Araminta, that alone would
 “make me tremble.” “An Araminta?” re-
 plied Blamzé, without any emotion, “Ara-
 “minta is a good creature who hears reason,
 “and who does not give herself up to despair:
 “I see somebody has been talking to you of
 “her; you shall have the whole account of my
 “connexions with her. Araminta is one of
 “those beauties, who seeing themselves on the
 “decline, that they may not fall into oblivion,
 “and to revive their expiring consequence,
 “have occasion from time to time to make
 “some noise in the world. She has engaged
 “me to pay her some small attentions, and to
 “behave to her with some warmth. It would
 “not have been handsome to refuse her, so I
 “made myself subservient to her views. In
 “order to give the more celebrity to our
 “adventure,

“ adventure, she has thought proper to take a
 “ little box. It was in vain that I represented
 “ to her that it was not worth while for a
 “ month at most which I had to bestow on her:
 “ the box was furnished without my know-
 “ ledge, and in the handsomest manner: she
 “ maid me promise, and there lay the grand
 “ point, to sup with her there with an air of
 “ mystery: yesterday was the day appointed.
 “ Araminta, for the greater secrecy, invited
 “ nobody there but five of her female friends,
 “ and permitted me to carry only the like
 “ number of my friends. I went: assumed an
 “ air of pleasure; was gallant, and warm
 “ towards her: in a word, I let all the guests
 “ go away, and did not retire myself till half
 “ an hour after them: this was all, in my
 “ opinion, that decorum required; and ac-
 “ cordingly Araminta was charmed with me.
 “ It was sufficient to bring her again into
 “ vogue; and I may henceforth take my leave
 “ of her whenever I please, without fear of
 “ reproach. This, Madam, is my manner
 “ of conducting myself. The reputation of a
 “ woman is as dear to me as my own: nay,
 “ more; it costs me nothing to make a sacri-
 “ fice to her glory of my own vanity. The
 “ greatest misfortune to a woman who sets
 “ up for a beauty, is to be forsaken; I never
 “ forsake them, I leave myself to be dis-
 “ charged,

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“ charged, I pretend even to be inconsolable
 “ at it, and sometimes I have shut myself up
 “ three days successively without seeing any
 “ body, in order to leave the lady from whom
 “ I had detached myself all the honour of the
 “ rupture. You see, beautifull Lucilia, that
 “ the men are not all as bad as they say, and
 “ that there are still among us principles and
 “ morals.”

Lucilia, who had read only the romances of
 time past, was not at all accustomed to this
 new stile, and her surprise redoubled at every
 syllable. “ What, Sir,” said she, “ is this
 “ what you call principles and morals !”—
 “ Yes, Madam, but this is rare, and the
 “ singular reputation which my proceedings
 “ have acquired me, does no great honour to
 “ the rest of our youth. Upon honour, the
 “ more I think on it, the more I wish for
 “ your own interest, that you had some bo-
 “ dy like me.” “ I flatter myself,” said Lu-
 cilia, “ that I shall be treated as tenderly as
 “ another, and that, at least, I shall not experi-
 “ ence the shock of being forsaken.”—“ You
 “ are merry, Madam; but to be serious, you
 “ deserve a person who thinks, and knows how
 “ to develop those qualities of heart and under-
 “ standing, which I think I have discovered
 “ in you. Lisere is a good man; but he ne-
 “ ver

“ ver knew how to make the most of his wife;
 “ and in general the desire of pleasing a hus-
 “ band is not strong enough, to induce a
 “ woman to give herself the trouble of being
 “ amiable to him to a certain degree. Hap-
 “ pily, he leaves you at your own pleasure;
 “ and you would not be worthy of so reason-
 “ able a procedure, if you should lose the most
 “ precious time of your life in indolence or
 “ dissipation.”

“ I am not afraid,” said Lucilia, “ of fall-
 “ ing into any of these excesses.”—“ We see
 “ however nothing else in the world.”—
 “ True, Sir; and that is the reason why I
 “ should be difficult in my choice, if I had
 “ any design of making one: for I think there
 “ is no excuse for an attachment but that it is
 “ solid and durable.”—“ What, Lucilia! at
 “ your age would you pique yourself upon
 “ constancy? Really if I thought so, I should
 “ be capable of committing a folly.”—“ And
 “ that folly would be...”—“ To grow
 “ prudent, and attach myself in good earnest.”
 —“ Seriously! would you have the courage?”
 —“ Upon my credit, I am a little fearfull of
 “ it, if you would have me own the truth.”—
 “ A strange declaration!”—“ It is a little ill
 “ expressed; but I beg you will pardon me:
 “ it is the first in my life.”—“ The first, say
 “ you?”—“ Yes, Madam: hitherto they
 “ have

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“ have had the modesty to spare me the trouble
 “ of making advances; but I see plainly that I
 “ grow old.”—“ Well, Sir, for the novelty
 “ of the thing, I pardon you this first essay: I
 “ will do more still, I will confess to you, that
 “ it cannot displease me.”—“ That is happiness
 “ indeed! do you give me leave to love you! and
 “ will you do me the honour to love me too?”
 —“ Ah! that is another thing; time shall
 “ show me whether you deserve it.”—“ Look
 “ at me, Lucilia.”—“ I do look at you.”—
 “ And do not you laugh!”—“ What should I
 “ laugh at?”—“ At your own answer. Do
 “ you take me for a child?”—“ I talk reason-
 “ ably to you, I think.”—“ And it is in order
 “ to talk reasonably to me, that you have
 “ done me the honour to grant me a *tête-à-*
 “ *tête*?”—“ I did not think, that in order to
 “ be reasonable, we had need of witnesses;
 “ after all, what have I said to you, which
 “ you ought not to have expected? I find in
 “ you graces, wit, an engaging and noble air.”
 —“ You are very good.”—“ But that is not
 “ enough to merit my confidence, and de-
 “ termine my inclination.”—“ Not enough,
 “ Madam! excuse me a little. Please to in-
 “ form me, what you would require more?”—
 “ A more thorough knowledge of your temper,
 “ a more intimate persuasion of your senti-
 “ ments for me. I promise you nothing, I
 “ forbid

“ forbid myself nothing ; you have every
 “ thing to hope, but nothing to claim : you
 “ are to consider whether that suits you.” —
 “ No price, without doubt, beautifull Lucilia,
 “ should be thought too dear to merit and
 “ obtain you : but seriously, would you have
 “ me renounce all the charms of the world to
 “ have my happiness depend on an uncertain
 “ contingency ? I am, you know, and I am
 “ not conceited of it, I am the man the most
 “ sought after in all France ; be it taste or
 “ fancy, it is no matter ; it is her concern
 “ that should have me, though but for a time.”
 “ You are right,” said Lucilia, “ I was unrea-
 “ sonable, and your moments are too precious.”
 — “ No, I confess to you seriously, that I am
 “ tired of being in fashion ; I was looking
 “ out for an object that might fix me ; I have
 “ found it ; I attach myself : nothing can
 “ be more fortunate ; but still this ought
 “ not to be to no purpose. You would have
 “ time for reflexion ; I give you twenty-four
 “ hours : I think that is very handsome, and
 “ I never gave so much time before.” “ My
 “ reflexions are too slow,” replied Lucilia,
 “ and you are too much in a hurry for us to
 “ agree on this point. I am young, perhaps
 “ have sensibility : but my age and sensibility
 “ shall never engage me in an imprudent step.
 “ I have told you, if my heart yields, time,
 “ proofs, reflexion, the pleasing habitude of
 “ confidence

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“ confidence and esteem, will have decided its
“ choice.” — “ But, Madam, in good earnest
“ now, do you think to find an amiable man
“ sufficiently disengaged to lose his time in
“ spinning out an intrigue to this length? and
“ do you yourself intend to pass your youth in
“ consulting whether you shall love or no?”
“ I cannot tell,” replied Lucilia, “ whether
“ I shall ever love, nor what time I shall em-
“ ploy in resolving; but that time will not be
“ lost, if it spares me regret.” “ I admire
“ you, Madam, I admire you,” said Blamzé,
taking his leave; “ but I have not the honour
“ to be of the ancient order of chivalry, and I
“ did not come here so early to compose a
“ romance with you.”

Lucilia, thunderstruck at the scene which
she had just had with Blamzé, passed in a short
time from astonishment to reflexion. “ Is this
“ then,” said she, “ the man in vogue, the
“ most amiable man in the world? He conde-
“ scends to think me handsome; and if he be-
“ lieved me capable of constancy, he would
“ be guilty of the folly of loving me in good
“ earnest; but yet he has not time to wait
“ till I have consulted myself. I must seize
“ the moment of pleasing him, and deter-
“ mine in twenty-four hours: he never
“ gave so much time before. Do the women
“ then humble themselves thus, and the men
“ thus prescribe them the conditions! happily
“ he

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“ he has made himself known to me. Under
 “ that modest air which had seduced me, what
 “ conceit, what presumption! ah! I see the
 “ most mortifying evil to a woman is that of
 “ loving a fop.”

The same day, after the opera, Lucilia's company being met together, Pomblac came to tell her, with an air of mystery, that she would have neither Blamzé nor Clairfont to sup with her. “ Very well,” said she, “ I require not of my friends any assiduity that constrains them: there are even such people whose assiduity would constrain me.” “ If Blamzé be of that number,” replied Pomblac frankly, “ Clairfont has delivered you from him, at least for some time.” — “ How so?” — “ Do not be frightened: all is very well over.” — “ How, Sir, what is over!” — “ After the opera, the curtain being dropt, we were on the stage, and, according to custom, hearing Blamzé deciding on every thing. Having given us his opinion on the singing, the dancing, and the decorations, he asked us, if we were to sup at the little Marchioness's? (pardon me, Madam, it was you he spoke of.) We replied Yes. “ I shall not be there,” said he; “ we are in the pouts since this morning.” I asked what might be the cause of these pouts? Blamzé told us, that you had made him an
 “ assignation;

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“ assignation; that he never came; that you
 “ were piqued at it; that he had made up
 “ that this morning; that you played the
 “ child; that he was in a hurry to conclude;
 “ that you had demanded time for reflexion;
 “ and that, tired out with your *ifs* and your
 “ *buts*, he had left you in the lurch. He
 “ told us, that you wanted to set off with a
 “ serious engagement; that he had some in-
 “ clination to it; but that he had not time
 “ enough on his hands; that, on calculating
 “ the strength of the citadel, he had judged
 “ that it might sustain a siege; but that no-
 “ thing would do for him but a surprise. “ It is
 “ an exploit that may suit some of you,” added
 he; “ you are young, it is the time when one
 “ loves to encounter difficulties, in order to
 “ overcome them; but I forewarn you, that vir-
 “ tue is her fort, and sensibility her weak part:
 “ every thing was concluded, if I had taken
 “ the trouble to play the passionate lover.”
 “ I was fully persuaded that he lied,” resumed
 the young man; “ but I had the prudence to
 “ be silent. Clairfont was not so patient as
 “ I: he signified to him, that he did not be-
 “ lieve one word of his story: and at this de-
 “ claration they went out together. I followed
 “ them. Clairfont received a wound.”—
 “ And Blamzé . . . ?”—“ Blamzé has two,
 “ of which he will not recover without some
 “ difficulty. While I helped him to get into
 “ his

“ his coach, “ If Clairfont,” said he, “ knows
 “ how to make an advantage of this ad-
 “ venture, he will carry Lucilia. A wo-
 “ man defends herself but ill against a man
 “ who defends her so well. Tell him that I
 “ dispense with this being a secret to her ; it
 “ is just that she should know what she owes
 “ to her knight.”

Lucilia had all the difficulty in the world to conceal the trouble and consternation which this story gave her. She feigned a head-ache, and it is well known that a head-ache, in a handsome woman, is a civil way of dismissing impertinents : so they left her alone at their rising from table.

Delivered up to herself, Lucilia could not console herself for having been the subject of a duel, which would make her the town-talk. She was strongly touched by the warmth with which Clairfont had revenged the affront offered her ; but what an humiliation to her if this adventure should make a noise, and Lisere should be informed of it ? Happily the secret was kept. Pomblac and Clairfont made a point of saving Lucilia's honour ; and Blamzé, being cured of his wounds, was far from boasting of an imprudence by which he had been so severely punished. It will be asked, perhaps, how a man till then so discreet came all of a sudden to cease to be so ? It is because we are
 under

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under less temptation to publish favours which we obtain, than to avenge ourselves for the rigours we undergo. This first indiscretion had like to have cost him his life. He was for a month on the brink of the grave. Clairfont had less difficulty to get his wound cured, and Lucilia saw him again with a tenderness hitherto unknown to him. If we attach ourselves to any one who has exposed his life for us, we attach ourselves as naturally to the person for whom we have exposed our life; and such services perhaps are stronger ties to the person who has performed them, than to the party for whom they were performed. Clairfont then became desperately in love with Lucilia; but the more she owed him in return, the less he dared to require any thing of her; he found a sensible pleasure in being generous, and he ceased to be so if he availed himself of the rights he had acquired to Lucilia's gratitude: accordingly he was more timorous than if he had merited nothing; but Lucilia read his soul, and this delicacy took the strongest hold of her. In the mean time, the fear of appearing to want gratitude, or the dread of carrying it too far, made her dissemble her knowledge of the intelligence Pomblac had given her; thus the good-will she testified towards Clairfont appeared free and disinterested, and he was so much the more affected

fected by it. Their mutual inclination every day made a sensible progress. They sought one another with their eyes, conferred with intimacy, listened to each other with complaisance, gave one another an account of their proceedings, in reality, without affectation, and, as it were, for the sake of saying something; but with so much exactness, that they knew, almost to a minute, the hour at which they were to see each other again. Clairfont insensibly became more familiar, and Lucilia less reserved. Nothing remained but to explain themselves; for which purpose there was no need of those marvellous incidents which love sometimes sends to the assistance of bashful lovers. One day that they were alone, Lucilia let her fan drop; Clairfont picks it up, and presents it to her; she receives it with a pleasing smile; that smile inspires the lover with the courage to kiss her hand: that hand was the most beautiful hand in the world, and from the moment that Clairfont's lips were applied to it, she was unable to withdraw it. Lucilia, in her emotion, made a slight effort to draw back her hand, he opposed a gentle violence, and his eyes, tenderly fixed on Lucilia's eyes, entirely disarmed her. Their looks had expressed every thing before their tongues interfered; and the mutual confession of their love was made and returned in two words.

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words. "I breathe, we love," said Clairfont, intoxicated with joy. "Alas! yes, we do love," replied Lucilia, with a profound sigh; "it is no longer time to deny it. But remember that I am bound by duties: those duties are inviolable, and, if I am dear to you, they will be sacred."

Lucilia's inclination was not one of those fashionable passions which stifle shame in their infancy, and Clairfont respected it too much to take advantage of it as a weakness. Transported with being loved, he for a long time confined his desires to the delicious possession of a heart pure, virtuous and faithful. "How little we love," said he to himself in his delirium, "when we are not made happy by the single pleasure of loving! Who was the stupid savage who first branded with the name of rigour that resistance which timid modesty opposes to wild desire? Is there, beautiful Lucilia, is there a denial which your looks would not soften? Can I complain when you smile upon me? And has my soul any wishes still to form, when my eyes draw from yours that heavenly voluptuousness with which you intoxicate all my senses? Far be from us, I consent to it, all those pleasures followed by regrets, which would trouble the serenity of your life. I respect your virtue as much as you cherish
" it

“ it yourself, and I should never pardon my-
 “ self the having caused any remorse to spring
 “ up in the bosom of innocence itself.” Sen-
 timents so heroick charmed Lucilia; and Clair-
 font, more tender every day, was every day
 more beloved, more happy, and more worthy
 to be so. But at length the raileries of his
 friends, and the suspicions they excited in him
 with respect to that virtue which he adored,
 embittered his happiness. He became gloomy,
 uneasy, jealous; every thing vexed him, every
 thing gave him umbrage. Lucilia every day
 perceived her chain become closer and heavier,
 every day there were new complaints to hear,
 new reproaches to undergo. Every man that
 she received with civility was a rival whom she
 must banish. The first sacrifices that he re-
 quired were made without opposition; he de-
 manded new ones, he obtained them; he
 wanted still more, she was weary of obeying
 him. Clairfont imagined he saw in Lucilia’s
 impatience an invincible attachment to the
 connexions which he prohibited; and that
 love, at first so delicate and submissive, be-
 came fierce and tyrannical. Lucilia was ter-
 rified; she sought to appease him, but to no
 purpose. “ I will not believe,” said the im-
 perious Clairfont, “ I will not believe that
 “ you love me till you live for me alone, as I
 “ do for you. What! if I possess, if I fill
 “ your

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“ your soul, what do you do with this trouble-
 “ some crowd? Ought it to cost you any
 “ thing to banish what afflicts me? Would it
 “ cost me any pain to renounce every thing
 “ that would displease you? What do I say?
 “ Is it not a continual violence that I do my-
 “ self to see any thing but Lucilia? Would
 “ to heaven we were freed from this crowd,
 “ which besieges you, and which deprives me
 “ every moment either of your looks or your
 “ thoughts. The solitude that so terrifies
 “ you would complete all my wishes. Are
 “ not our souls of the same nature? Or the
 “ love which you think you feel, is it not the
 “ same that I feel? You complain that I de-
 “ mand sacrifices of you! Require, Lucilia,
 “ require in your turn; choose the most pain-
 “ full, the most grievous trials; you shall see
 “ whether I hesitate. There is no connexion
 “ which I would not break, no effort which
 “ I would not make; or rather I should not
 “ make any. The pleasure of gratifying you
 “ will make me amends, will serve instead of
 “ every thing; and what they call denials
 “ would be to me enjoyments.” “ You
 “ think so, Clairfont,” replied the tender and
 ingenuous Lucilia; “ but you deceive your-
 “ self. Each of these denials is but little;
 “ but all together make up a great deal. It
 “ is the continuance of them that is tiresome :
 “ you

“ you have made me know by experience,
 “ that no complaisance is inexhaustible.”
 While she spoke thus, Clairfont's eyes, sparkling with impatience, were sometimes turned up to heaven, and sometimes fixed on her.
 “ Believe me,” continued Lucilia, “ the
 “ sacrifices of true love are made in the heart,
 “ and under the veil of mystery: self-love
 “ alone demands publick ones: to that victory is little; it aspires to the honours of a
 “ triumph: and that is what you exact.”

“ What a cold analysis,” cried he, “ and
 “ what vain metaphysics! Love, to be sure,
 “ reasons thus! I love you, Madam; nothing, to my misfortune, is truer; I would
 “ sacrifice a thousand lives to please you; and
 “ whatever may be this sentiment which you
 “ call self-love, it detaches me from the whole
 “ world to deliver myself up solely to you; but
 “ in abandoning myself thus, I would possess you in the same manner. Cleon, Linval, Pomblac, all these are sufficient to
 “ make me uneasy: I cannot answer for myself. After this, if you love me, nothing
 “ ought to be more precious to you than my
 “ repose; and my uneasiness, were it even a
 “ folly, you ought to dissipate. But why do
 “ I say a folly? You render my alarms and
 “ suspicions but too reasonable. And how
 “ should I be easy, when I see that every one
 “ who

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“ who comes near you engages you more than
“ myself?”

“ Ah, Sir, what acknowledgements do I
“ owe you!” said Lucilia with a sigh: “ you
“ make me see the depth of the abyss into
“ which love was going to plunge me. Yes,
“ I see that there is no slavery comparable to
“ that which a jealous lover imposes.”—“ I,
“ Madam, do I make you a slave? Have not
“ you even an absolute empire over me? Do
“ not you do what you please with me?”—
“ Enough, Sir: I have suffered a long time;
“ I flattered myself; but you now draw me out
“ of my illusion, and nothing can lead me into
“ it again. Be my friend, if you can be so:
“ it is the only title that remains to you with
“ me.”—“ Ah, cruel woman, would you
“ have my death?”—“ I want nothing but
“ your ease and my own.”—“ You over-
“ whelm me. What is my crime?”—“ Love-
“ ing yourself too well, and not esteeming me
“ enough.”—“ Ah! I swear to you.”—
“ Swear nothing: your jealousy is a vice in
“ your disposition, and the disposition never
“ corrects itself. I know you, Clairfont, I
“ begin to dread you, and cease to love you.
“ This very moment I see my frankness makes
“ you desperate; but of two punishments I
“ choose the shortest; and by taking away
“ from you the right of being jealous, I create
“ you

“ you the happy necessity of ceasing to be so.”
 “ I know you in my turn,” replied Clairfont
 with a stifled rage: “ the delicacy of a sen-
 “ sible soul ill agrees with the levity of yours;
 “ it is a Blamzé that you must have for a
 “ lover, and I was a fool to take it ill....”
 “ Go no farther,” interrupted Lucilia; “ I
 “ know all that I owe to you; but I retire to
 “ spare you the shame of having reproached
 “ me with it.”

Clairfont went off in a rage, and fully re-
 solved never more to revisit a woman whom he
 had so tenderly loved, and who had dismissed
 him with so much inhumanity.

Lucilia, restored to herself, found herself,
 as it were, relieved from a burthen that over-
 whelmed her. But, on one side, the dangers
 of love, which she had just experienced, on
 the other, the sad prospect of everlasting indif-
 ference, suffered her to hope hereafter for no-
 thing but cruel disquietudes, or insupportable
 dullness. “ What,” said she, “ has heaven
 “ given me a sensible heart only to make me
 “ the sport of a fop, the victim of a tyrant,
 “ or the gloomy companion of a kind of phi-
 “ losopher, neither affected nor moved at any
 “ thing?” These reflexions plunged her into
 a languor which she was not able to conceal:
 her company perceived it, and became soon as
 melancholy as herself. The women, to whom

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her house was a rendezvous, were alarmed at it. "She is lost," said they, "if we draw her not out of this sad state; she is disgusted with the world: she loves nothing but solitude; the symptoms of her melancholy become every day more terrible, and, by the force of some violent passion which agitates her, it is to be feared that she will fall again into the power of her husband. Do we know nobody to turn this young head? Blamzé himself set about it the wrong way, and did not succeed: as to Clairfont, on whom we depended, he is a little fool who loves like a madman; no wonder she should be affronted." "Hold," said Cephisa, after being lost in thought for some time; "Lucilia has a romantick way of thinking; she must have something in the fairy taste, and the magnificent Dorimon is exactly the man that suits her. She will grow mad for him, I am sure; let us engage him only to go and invite her to supper at his fine country-house: I will take upon me to give him his lesson." "The party was accepted, and Dorimon made acquainted with it.

Dorimon was the man in the world who knew best the most able artists, received them with the best grace, and recompensed them most

most liberally; accordingly he had the reputation of a connoisseur, and a man of taste.

If, some centuries hence, this tale should be read, they may imagine it mere fiction, and the habitation I am going to describe may pass for a fairy castle; but it is not my fault if the luxury of our times comes into competition with the marvellous of fables, and if, in the representation of our follies, probability should be wanting to truth.

On the rich banks of the Seine arises, in form of an amphitheatre, a small eminence exposed to the first rays of the morning, and the ardent fires of noon. The forest which crowns it defends it from the chilling blast of the North, and the watery influence of the West. From the summit of the hill fall in cascades three copious springs of water purer than crystal, which the industrious hand of art has conducted by a thousand windings over green slopes. Sometimes these waters divide themselves, and glide along in mæanders; sometimes they re-unite in basons, in which the heavens behold themselves with delight; then they precipitate themselves, and pour along, dashing against rocks cut out into grottos, in which the chisle has imitated the fancifull varieties of Nature. The Seine, which forms a bow at the foot of the hill, receives them into his peaceable bosom; and

their fall recalls to our minds those fabulous times in which the nymphs of the fountains descended into the humid palace of the rivers, to temper the ardours of youth and love.

An ingenious whimsicalness seems to have designed the gardens watered by these streams. All sides of this smiling scene agree without sameness: the very symmetry is striking: the eye roves without lassitude, and reposes without dullness. A noble elegance, a richness well managed, a bold, and yet delicate taste, have been employed in embellishing them. Nothing is neglected, nothing forced or laboured with too much art. The concourse of simple beauties forms all its magnificence; and the equilibrium of masses, joined to the variety of forms, produces that beautiful harmony which forms the delight of beholders.

Groves ornamented with statues, lattice-work fashioned into arbours and bowers, decorate all the known gardens; but these riches, displayed without understanding and taste, generally excite nothing more than a cold and dull admiration, soon attended with satiety. Here the disposition and connexion of the parts form, of a thousand different sensations, but one continued enchantment. The second object that is discovered adds to the pleasure raised by the first; and both are still further embellished

lished by the charms of the new object that succeeds, without effacing them.

This delicious landscape is terminated by a palace of such airy architecture; that the Corinthian order itself has less elegance and lightness. Here the columns imitated the palm-trees united in arbours. The root of the vault formed of palms composes a chapter more natural, and as noble as the vase of Callimachus. These palms are interwoven among each other in the interstices of the columns, and their natural wreathings concealed from the deceived eye the heaviness of the entablature. As these columns are sufficient for the weight of the edifice, they leave a continued transparency to the walls, by means of chasms artfully contrived. We see none of those redoubled roofs which crush our modern architecture; and the frightfull irregularity of our Gothick chimneys is lost in the crown-work.

The interior luxury of the palace is suitable to the magnificence without. It is, in short, the temple of the arts and of taste. The pencil, the chisle, the graving tool, every thing that industry has invented for the delicacies of life, is there displayed with a discreet profusion; and the Pleasures, the daughters of Opulence, there flatter the soul through all the senses.

Lucilia was dazzled with so much magnificence; the first evening appeared to her a dream: it was nothing but one continued scene of shows and feastings, of which she plainly perceived herself was the divinity. The earnestness, the vivacity, the gallantry with which Dorimon did the honours of this beautiful dwelling, the changes of scene which he produced with one single look, the absolute empire which he seemed to exercise over the arts and pleasures, recalled to Lucilia's imagination every thing that she had read of the most celebrated enchanter. She dared not trust her eyes, and even thought herself enchanted. If Dorimon had availed himself of the intoxication into which she was plunged, the dream perhaps had ended after the manner of modern romances. But Dorimon was merely gallant; and all he had the courage to permit himself to do, was to ask Lucilia to come sometimes and embellish his hermitage; for so he called this mansion.

Lucilia's companions had observed her with attention. The most experienced judged that Dorimon was too much taken up with his magnificence, and too little with his happiness. "He ought," said they, "to have seized the first moment of surprise: it is a kind of transport which we do not feel twice."

In

In the mean time, Lucilia's head being filled with all that she had just seen, she formed to herself the most wonderfull idea of Dorimon himself. So much gallantry bespoke an imagination brisk and sprightly, a cultivated genius, a delicate taste, and a lover, if ever there was one, wholly taken up with the care of pleasing. This portrait, though a little too flattering, was not wholly unlike. Dorimon was yet young, of an engaging figure, and a most joyous temper. His wit was all in sallies; he had in his way of thinking little warmth, but much refinement. Nobody said more gallant things; but he had not the gift of enforcing them: every body loved to hear him, but nobody believed him. He was the most seducing man in the world for a coquette, the least dangerous to a woman of sentiment.

She consented to see him again at his own house, and this gave occasion to new entertainments. But in vain had the gallantry of Dorimon reassembled there all the pleasures which she had given birth to, in vain were these pleasures varied every instant with as much art as taste: Lucilia was at first slightly moved, soon after satiated; and before the close of the day, she conceived it possible to grow dull in this delicious abode. Dorimon, who never quitted her, exerted all the talents

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of pleasing; he held her in discourse on a thousand ingenious subjects, he mingled also some soft things with them; but still this was not what she had conceived. She thought to find a god, and Dorimon was but a man; the pomp of his house eclipsed him, proportions were not observed; and Dorimon, while he surpassed himself, was all the while inferiour to the idea which every thing around him inspired.

He was very far from suspecting the injury which this comparison did him in the imagination of Lucilia, and he waited only one happy moment to avail himself of his advantages. After the concert, and before supper, he led her, as it were by chance, into a solitary closet, where she might go, he said, and ruminate, when she should have any moments of pouting. The door opens, and Lucilia sees her image reflected a thousand times in the dazzling pier-glasses; the voluptuous paintings with which the pannels were covered, multiplied themselves around her. Lucilia, admiring herself, thought she beheld the goddess of Loves. At this sight an exclamation of surprise and admiration escaped her, and Dorimon seized the instant of this sudden emotion. "Reign here, there is your throne," said he to her, showing her a sofa, which the hand of fairies had sown with flowers. "My
" throne!"

“ throne!” said Lucilia, seating herself, and with a tone of gaiety; “ well, ay, I like it pretty well, and I find myself the queen of a mighty pretty people.” She spoke of the multitude of Loves which she perceived in the glasses. Amidst these subjects, “ Will you condescend, Madam, to admit me?” said Dorimon with ardour, and throwing himself at her feet. “ Ah! as to you,” said she with a serious air, “ you are no child;” and at these words she would have got up, but he retained her with a strong hand, and the effort she made to escape rendered him still bolder. “ Where am I then?” said she with terrour: “ let me go, let me go, I say, or my cries” These words awed him. “ Excuse, Madam,” said he, “ an imprudence, of which you are yourself in some measure the cause. To come here *tête-à-tête*, and repose yourself on this sofa, as you have done, is giving to understand, according to the received custom, that a little violence would not be ill taken. With you I see plainly that it means nothing; we misunderstood each other.” “ Oh! very much,” said Lucilia, going out in a rage; and Dorimon followed her, a little confounded at his mistake. Happily their absence had not been long enough to give time for slander to speak ill of it. Lucilia, dis-

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sembling her perturbation, told the company that she had just been seeing a very fine cabinet. They ran there in a body; and their exclamations of admiration were only interrupted by the coming in of supper.

The sumptuousness of this feast seemed to improve still upon all the pleasures that they had tasted. But Dorimon endeavoured in vain to do the honours of it; he had lost that gaiety which was so natural to him; and Lucilia replied to the gallant things they addressed to her, in order to draw her out of her reverie, only by a forced smile, with which good-breeding endeavours to disguise ill-humour.

“ There,” said her friends to her, on going home with her, “ there now is a man who
“ suits you: with him life is a continual enchantment; it appears as if all the pleasures
“ obeyed his voice; the moment he commands, they arrive in troops.”

“ There are some,” said Lucilia coldly,
“ which cannot be commanded: they are above
“ riches; we find them only in our hearts.”
“ Upon my word, my dear,” said Cephisa to her,
“ you are very difficult.” “ Yes, Madam, very
“ difficult,” replied she with a sigh: and during the rest of the journey they kept a profound silence. “ This is nothing but a handsome woman spoilt,” said her friends, at quitting her.
“ Yet if her whims were chearfull ones, we
“ might

“ might amuse ourselves with them ; but no-
 “ thing in the world is more gloomy. It
 “ was worth while indeed to separate from
 “ her husband, to be a prude to the rest of the
 “ world !”

“ Is this then the world so much boasted
 “ of ?” said Lucilia, on her side : “ I have pass-
 “ ed rapidly through every thing agreeable in
 “ it : what have I found ? a coxcomb, a jea-
 “ lous lover, a vain man, who arrogates to
 “ himself, as so many charms, his gardens,
 “ his palace, and his entertainments, and who
 “ thinks that the severest virtue can desire
 “ no better than to yield to him. Ah ! how
 “ I hate those makers of romances, who
 “ have lulled me with their fables ! My ima-
 “ gination filled with a thousand chimeras,
 “ I thought my husband insipid ; and yet he
 “ is worth more than all I have seen. He is
 “ plain ; but is not his plainness a thousand
 “ times preferable to the vain pretensions of a
 “ Blamzé ? He is temperate in his affections,
 “ and what would become of me if he were
 “ violent and passionate like Clairfont ? He
 “ loved me little, but he loved only me ;
 “ and if I had been reasonable, he loved me
 “ enough to make me happy. I had not
 “ with him those pompous and noisy plea-
 “ sures which intoxicate at first, and soon
 “ after cloy : but his complaisance, his
 “ sweetness,

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“ sweetness, his delicate attentions, furnish-
 “ ed me every moment with pleasures, the most
 “ pure and solid, if I had but known how to
 “ relish them. Fool that I was! I pursued
 “ illusions, and fled happiness itself: it is pla-
 “ ced in the silence of the passions, the equi-
 “ librium and repose of the soul. But alas!
 “ it is a fine time to acknowledge my er-
 “ rours, when they have made me lose the
 “ friendship, the confidence, perhaps the
 “ esteem of my husband. Thank heaven, I
 “ have nothing to reproach myself with but
 “ the indiscretions of my age. But is Lifere
 “ obliged to believe me in this point, and
 “ would he vouchsafe to hear me? Ah! how
 “ difficult is it to return to one’s duty, when
 “ we have once abandoned it! difficult! and
 “ why? who hinders me? the dread of being
 “ humbled? But Lifere is a good man; and
 “ if he has spared me in my errors, would
 “ he distress me in my reformation? I have
 “ but to detach myself from a pernicious so-
 “ ciety, to live at home, with such of my
 “ female friends as my husband respects, and
 “ whom I can see without blushing. All the
 “ while that he has seen me delivered up to
 “ the world, he has never come near me; but
 “ if he sees me restored to myself, he will
 “ condescend perhaps to recall me to him; and
 “ if his heart be not restored to me, the only
 “ consolation

“ consolation that remains to me, is that of
 “ rendering myself worthy of it : I shall be
 “ at least reconciled to myself, if I cannot be
 “ so to my husband.”

Lisere, full of grief, had kept sight of her through all her whirl of company : he depended on the justness of her way of thinking, and the probity of her soul. “ She will perceive,” said he, “ the frivolousness of the pleasures which
 “ she seeks, the folly of the women, the vanity of the men, the falsity of both ; and,
 “ if she returns virtuous, her virtue will be
 “ but the more confirmed by the dangers it
 “ has run. But will she have escaped all the
 “ shelves that surround her, the charms of
 “ flattery, the snares of seduction, the attractions of pleasure ? We despise the world when
 “ we know it thoroughly ; but we give ourselves up to it before we know it, and the heart
 “ is frequently lost before reason enlightens it.
 “ O Lucilia !” cried he, looking at the portrait of his wife, which in solitude was his only conversation, “ O Lucilia ! you were
 “ so deserving of being happy ! and I flattered
 “ myself that you would be so with me. Alas !
 “ perhaps some one of those handsome corrupters, who form at once the ornament and
 “ misfortune of the world, is at this very
 “ time employed in seducing her innocence,
 “ and is bent upon her defeat, merely for the
 “ the

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“ the pleasure of boasting of it. What;
 “ would my wife’s shame raise an eternal bar-
 “ rier between us ! It would no longer be
 “ permitted me to live with her, from whom
 “ death alone ought to separate me ! I have
 “ betrayed her in abandoning her. Heaven
 “ had chose me for the guardian of her impru-
 “ dent and frail youth. I have consulted
 “ only custom, and I have been struck only
 “ by the frightfull idea of being hated as a
 “ tyrant.”

While Lisere floated thus in this cruel uncer-
 tainty, Lucilia was not less agitated between
 the desire of returning, and the dread of being
 repulsed. Twenty times had she risen, after
 passing the night in sighs and tears, with
 the resolution of going to wait his rising, in
 order to throw herself at his feet, and ask his
 pardon. But a shame, well known to sensible
 and delicate souls, had still withheld her foot-
 steps. If Lisere did not despise her, if he still
 preserved any feeling for her, any esteem;
 from the time when she had broken off
 with her parties, from the time that she
 had lived retired and solitary, how came it
 that he had never vouchsafed to see her
 even once ? Every day, as he went by, he en-
 quired after his lady’s health ; she heard of
 it ; she hoped that at last he would ask to
 see her, each day this hope was renewed ;
 she

she expected, all trembling, the moment of Lisere's calling; she drew as near as possible, in order to listen to him, and retired in tears, after having heard him ask, as he went along, *How does my Lady do?* She could have wished to have Lisere informed of her repentance, of her return to herself; "but to whom can I trust?" said she: "to friends! is there one of them faithfull enough, discreet enough, wise enough, for so delicate an interposition? Some of them might have the talents, but had not the zeal; and others had the zeal, but not the talents: besides, it is so hard to trust to others what we dare not confess ourselves! A letter . . . ; but what shall I write to him? general expressions would not touch him, and particulars are so humiliating!" At length a thought came into her head, by which her delicacy and sensibility were equally satisfied. Lisere had absented himself for two days, and Lucilia seized the opportunity of his absence to execute her design.

Lisere had an old servant, whom Lucilia saw melting into tears at the moment of their separation, and whose zeal, honesty, and discretion, were well known to her. "Ambrose," said she to him, "I have a favour to ask of you." "Ah! Madam," said the good man, "command me; I am yours, with all
" my

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“ my soul : would to God that you and my
 “ master loved one another as I love you ! I
 “ know not which of you is wrong ; but I am
 “ sorry for you both : it would be delightfull to
 “ see you together, and I see nothing here
 “ which does not give me sorrow, ever since you
 “ have been on ill terms.” “ It is perhaps my
 “ fault,” said Lucilia, humiliated ; “ but, my
 “ dear Ambrose, the evil is not without reme-
 “ dy : only do what I shall tell you. You know
 “ that my portrait is in your master’s cham-
 “ ber.”—“ Oh ! yes, Madam, he knows it
 “ very well too ; for he sometimes shuts him-
 “ self up with it for whole days : it is all his
 “ consolation. He looks at it, he talks to it, he
 “ sighs most pitifully ; and I see plainly that the
 “ poor gentleman would still much rather con-
 “ verse with you than with your picture.”—
 “ You tell me very comfortable news, my dear
 “ Ambrose ; but go and take away that por-
 “ trait privately, and choose, in order to
 “ bring it me, a time when you may not be
 “ seen by any body.”—“ I, Madam, deprive
 “ my master of all that he holds dearest in the
 “ world ! rather ask my life.” “ Be assured,”
 replied Lucilia, “ my design is not to de-
 “ prive him of it. To-morrow evening thou
 “ shalt come and fetch it, to put it in its
 “ place again : I will only beg of you
 “ to say nothing to my husband.” “ Very
 “ well,”

“ well,” said Ambrose, “ I know that you
 “ are goodness itself, and you would not now
 “ at the latter end of my life give me the mor-
 “ tification of having made my master uneasy.”
 The faithful Ambrose executed Lucilia’s or-
 der. She had in her portrait the tender and
 languishing air which was natural to her; but
 her look was serene, and her hair set with
 flowers. She sent for her painter, ordered
 him to draw her with her hair dishevelled, and
 to paint the tears trickling from her eyes. As
 soon as her idea was carried into execution, the
 picture was replaced in Lisere’s apartment. He
 comes into it, and his eyes are soon raised on
 the dear object. It is easy to conceive how
 great was his surprise. The dishevelled hair
 strikes him first: he draws near, and sees the
 tears flow: “ Ah!” cried he, “ ah Luci-
 “ lia! are these the tears of repentance? Is
 “ that the sorrow of love?” He goes out
 transported, he flies to her, he seeks her with
 his eyes, and he finds her in the same situation
 as the picture had represented her. Immove-
 able for a moment, he eyes her with tender-
 ness; and suddenly throwing himself at her
 feet, “ Is it really true,” said he, “ that my
 “ wife is restored to me?” “ Yes,” said
 Lucilia, with sighs, “ yes, if you think her
 “ still worthy of you?” “ Can she have cea-
 “ sed to be so,” replied Lisere, locking her in
 his

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his arms. "No, my dear, be comforted:
 "I know your soul, and I have never ceased
 "to mourn and to esteem you. You would
 "not return to me, if the world had been able
 "to seduce you, and this voluntary return is
 "the proof of your virtue." "Oh! thank
 "heaven," said she, (her heart being eased
 by the tears which flowed in abundance from
 her eyes) "thank heaven, I have no shame-
 "full weakness to blush at: I have been fool-
 "ish, but not dishonest." "If I doubted it,
 "would you now be in my bosom?" replied
 Lisere; and at these words . . . but who can
 describe the transports of two sensible hearts,
 which, after having groaned under a cruel sepa-
 ration, were re-united for ever? On learning
 their reconciliation, the family were filled
 with joy, and the good Ambrose said, his eyes
 swimming with tears, "God be praised! I
 "shall now die content."

From that day, the tender union of this
 pair serves as an example to all those of their
 age. Their divorce has convinced them that
 the world had nothing that could make either
 of them amends; and this is what I call
A HAPPY DIVORCE.

ANNETE



ANNETE and LUBIN,

A TRUE STORY.

IF it be dangerous to tell every thing to children, it is more dangerous still to leave them in ignorance of every thing. There are grievous crimes according to the laws, which are not so in the eyes of nature; and we are now going to see into what an abyss the latter leads innocence when she has a fillet over her eyes.

Annete and Lubin were the children of two sisters. These strict ties of blood ought to be incompatible with those of marriage. But Annete and Lubin had no suspicion that there were in the world other laws than the simple laws of nature. From the age of eight years they kept sheep together on the smiling banks of the Seine. They now touched on their sixteenth; but their youth differed not from infancy but by a warmer sentiment of mutual friendship.

Annete beneath a plain country coif, bound back negligently her ebon hair. Two large
blue

blue eyes sparkled beneath her long eye-lashes, and expressed most innocently every thing which the dull eyes of our cold coquettes endeavour to express. Her rosy lips seemed to solicit to be kissed. Her complexion, tanned by the sun, was enlivened by that light shade of purple which colours the down of the peach. Every part of her which the veils of modesty concealed from the rays of noon, effaced the whiteness of the lily: we thought we saw the head of a lively Brunette on the shoulders of a beautiful Blonde.

Lubin had that decisive, open and joyous air, which proclaims a free and contented mind. His look was that of desire, his laugh the laugh of joy. When he burst out, he displayed teeth whiter than ivory. The freshness of his round cheeks invited the hand to pat them. Add to all this a nose in the air, a dimple in the chin, white silver locks, curled by the hand of Nature; a genteel make, a deliberate pace, the frankness of the golden age, which suspects and blushes at nothing. This was the portrait of Annete's cousin.

Philosophy brings man back nearer to nature, and it is for this reason that instinct sometimes resembles it. I should not be surprised then if my shepherds should be imagined to be somewhat philosophical; but I forewarn my readers that it is without their knowing it.

As

As they both went frequently to sell fruits and milk in the city, and as people were glad to see them, they had an opportunity of observing what passed in the world, and of giving an account to each other of their little reflexions. They compared their lot to that of the most opulent citizens, and found themselves happier and wiser. “The senseless creatures!” said Lubin. “During the finest part of the year they shut themselves up in quarries! Is it not true, Annete, that our hut is preferable to those magnificent prisons which they call palaces? When the thatch that covers us is burnt up by the sun, I go to the neighbouring forest, and in less than an hour make you a new house more cheerful than the former. The air and the light are ours. A branch less gives us the freshness of the East or the North; a branch more defends us from the heats of the South and the rains of the West: that is not very dear, Annete?”

“No truly,” said she; “and I cannot think why in the fine weather they do not come all, two and two, to live in a pretty hut. Have you seen, Lubin, those tapestries of which they are so vain? What comparison between them and our beds of verdure? How we sleep on them! how we wake!”—“And you, Annete, have you re-

I

“marked

“ marked what trouble they take to give a rural
“ air to the walls which shut them up? Those
“ landscapes which they endeavour to imitate,
“ nature has made for us; it is for us that the
“ sun shines; it is for us that the seasons de-
“ light to vary themselves.” “ Right,” said
Annete, “ I carryed the other day some
“ strawberries to a lady of quality; they were
“ entertaining her with musick. Ah, Lubin,
“ what a terrible noise! I said in myself:
“ why does she not come some morning and
“ hear our nightingales? The unhappy woman
“ was laid down upon cushions; and she
“ yawned in such a manner as to move pity.
“ I asked what ailed her ladyship; they told
“ me that she had the vapours. Do you know,
“ Lubin, what the vapours are?”—“ No, not
“ I; but I am afraid they are one of those dis-
“ tempers which one gets in the city, and which
“ take away from persons of quality the use of
“ their legs. That is very sad, is it not, An-
“ nete? And if they were to hinder you from
“ running upon the grass, you would be very
“ sorry, I believe!”—“ O, very sorry; for
“ I love to run, especially, Lubin, when I
“ run after you.”

Such was pretty nearly the philosophy of Lu-
bin and Annete. Free from envy and ambi-
tion, their state had nothing humiliating to
them, nothing painfull. They passed the fine
weather

weather in that green hut, the master-piece of Lubin's art. In the evening they were obliged to lead back their flocks to the village; but the fatigue and pleasures of the day prepared them a tranquill repose. The morning recalled them to the fields, more earnest to see each other again. Sleep effaced in their lives nothing but the moments of absence: it preserved them from dullness. Nevertheless a happiness so pure was not unalterable. The slender waste of Annete insensibly became rounder. She knew not the cause of it; Lubin himself did not suspect it.

The Bailiff of the village was the first who perceived it. "God defend you," Annete, said he to her one day; "you seem to be very round!" "True," said she, dropping a curtsy. — "But, Annete, what has happened to this handsome shape? Have you had any love affair?" — "Any love affair? not that I know." — "Ah! child! nothing is more certain; you have listened to some of our young fellows." — "Yes, truly, I do listen to them; does that spoil the shape?" — "No, not that; but some of them have a kindness for you." — "Kindness for me?" — "Ay, Lubin and I are kind to each other all the day long." — "And you have granted him every thing, is it not so?" — "Oh, Lord, yes: Lubin and I have nothing to refuse one another." — "How, nothing to

“ refuse one another ! ” — “ Oh, nothing at all ;
“ I should be very sorry if he kept any thing
“ to himself, and more sorry still to have him
“ believe, that I have any thing which is not
“ his. Are we not cousins ? ” — “ Cousins ? ” —
“ Cousins germain, I tell you. ” — “ O hea-
“ ven ! ” cried the bailiff, “ here is an ad-
“ venture ! ” — “ Ay, or else do you think
“ that we should have been every day together ?
“ that we should have had but one and the
“ same hut ? I have heard it said, indeed, that
“ the shepherds are to be dreaded ; but a cou-
“ sin is not dangerous. ” The judge continued
to interrogate. Annete continued to reply,
inasmuch that it was clearer than the day that
she would shortly be a mother. Become a
mother before marriage ! that was a riddle to
Annete. The bailiff explained it to her.
“ What, ” said he to her, “ the first time that
“ this misfortune happened, did not the sun
“ hide himself ? did not the heavens thunder
“ upon you ? ” — “ No, ” replied Annete, “ I
“ remember it was the finest weather in the
“ world. ” — “ Did not the earth shake ! did
“ it not open itself ! ” — “ Alas, no, ” said
Annete again, “ I saw it covered with flow-
“ ers. ” — “ And do you know what a crime
“ you have committed ? ” — “ I know not
“ what a crime is ; but all that we have done,
“ I swear to you, was in good friendship, and
“ without

"without any ill design: you think that I am
 "big with child; I should never have thought
 "it; but if it be so, I am very glad of it: I
 "shall have a little Lubin, perhaps." "No,"
 replied the man of law, "you will bring into
 "the world a child, which will own neither
 "its father nor mother, which will be ashamed
 "of its birth, and will reproach you for it.
 "What have you done, unhappy girl, what
 "have you done! How I pity you! and how
 "I pity that innocent!" These last words
 made Annete grow pale and tremble. Lubin
 found her all in tears. "Hear," said she to him
 with terror, "do you know what has happen-
 "ed; I am big with child."—"With child,
 "and by whom?"—"By you."—"You
 "joke. And how has that happened?"—"The
 "bailiff has just explained it to me."
 —"Well?"—"Well, when we thought
 "we were only showing kindness to each
 "other, we were making love." "That
 "is droll!" said Lubin: "only see how we
 "come into the world. But you are in tears,
 "my dear Annete! Is it this that makes you
 "uneasy?"—"Yes, the bailiff has made me
 "tremble: my child, he said, will own nei-
 "ther its father nor mother; he will reproach
 "us with his birth."—"Why?"—"Because
 "we are cousins, and have committed a
 "crime. Do you know, Lubin, what a
 VOL. II. G "crime

“ crime is ? ” — “ Yes, it is a wicked thing.
“ For example, it is a crime to take away life
“ from any one ; but it is not to give it. The
“ bailiff does not know what he says. ” —
“ Ah, my dear Lubin ! go and find him out,
“ I beseech thee : I am all of a tremble. He
“ has put I know not what into my soul, which
“ embitters all the pleasure I had in loving
“ thee. ”

Lubin ran to the bailiff. “ A word, if you
“ please, Mr. Judge,” said he accosting him :
“ you will have it that I am not to be the fa-
“ ther of my own child, and that Annete is
“ not to be its mother ? ” “ Ah, wretch !
“ dare you show yourself,” said the bailiff,
“ after ruining this young innocent ? ” “ You
“ are a wretch yourself,” replied Lubin. “ I
“ have not ruined Annete ; she waits me now
“ in our hut. But it is you, wicked man,
“ that (she says) have put I know not what
“ into her soul, that grieves her ; and it is very
“ ill done to afflict Annete. ” — “ You young
“ villain, it is you that have stolen from her
“ her chief good. ” — “ And what is that ? ”
— “ Innocence and honour. ” — “ I love
“ her more than my life,” said the shepherd ;
“ and if I have done her any injury, I am
“ here to repair it. Marry us ; who hin-
“ ders you ? We ask no better. ” — “ That
“ is impossible. ” — “ Impossible ! And why ?
“ The

“ The most difficult part in my opinion is
 “ over, seeing we are now father and mo-
 “ ther.” “ And there is the crime,” cried
 the judge: “ you must separate, you must fly
 “ each other.”—“ Fly each other ! And have
 “ you the heart to propose it to me, Mr. Bai-
 “ liff? And who is to take care of Annete and
 “ my child? Quit them ! I would sooner die.”
 “ The law obliges thee to it,” said the bailiff.
 “ There is no law that holds good there,” re-
 plied Lubin, clapping on his hat. “ We
 “ have a child without you, and if it please
 “ heaven we will have more, and we will love
 “ for ever.”—“ Ah, the audacious young
 “ knave, what rebel against the law !”—“ Ah,
 “ the wicked man, the bad heart, that wants
 “ me to abandon Annete ! Let me go and find
 “ out our parson,” said he to himself: “ he is
 “ a good man, and will have pity on us.” The
 priest was severer than the judge, and Lubin
 retired, confounded at having offended heaven
 without knowing it. “ For after all,” said
 he still, “ we have done nobody any harm.”

“ My dear Annete,” cried Lubin on seeing
 her again, “ every body condemns us ; but no
 “ matter : I will never leave you.” “ I am
 “ big with child,” said Annete, reclining her
 face on her two hands, which she bathed with
 tears, “ and I cannot be your wife ! Leave
 “ me, I am distressed ; I have no longer any

“ pleasure in seeing you. Alas, I am ashamed
“ of myself, and I reproach myself for all the
“ moments that I have passed with you.”
“ Ah, the cursed bailiff,” said Lubin, “ but
“ for him we were so happy !”

From that moment, Annete, a prey to her grief, could not endure the light. If Lubin wanted to console her, he saw her tears stream afresh : she replied to his caresses only by pushing him off with horror. “ What ! my
“ dear Annete,” said he to her, “ am I no
“ longer the Lubin you loved so much ?” —
“ Alas, no ; you are no longer the same. I
“ tremble the moment you come near me ; my
“ child who moves in my womb, and whom
“ I should have had so much joy in feeling,
“ seems already to complain that I have given
“ him my own cousin for a father.” “ You
“ will hate my child, then ?” said Lubin to her sobbing. “ Oh no, no, I shall love it
“ with all my soul,” said she. “ At least they
“ will not forbid me to love my child, to give
“ him my milk and my life. But that child
“ will hate its mother : the judge has foretold
“ it to me.” “ Don’t mention that old devil,”
said Lubin, clasping her in his arms, and bathing her with tears ; “ your child shall love you,
“ my dear Annete ; he will love you, for I am
“ his father.”

Lubin

Lubin in despair employed all the eloquence of nature and love to dissipate Annete's fear and grief. "Let us see," said he, "what have we done to anger heaven? We have led out our flocks to feed in the same meadows; there is no harm in that. I have built a hut, you have taken pleasure in reposing in it; there is no harm in that. You slept upon my knees; I drew in your breath, and that I might not lose one gasp, I drew gently near you; there was no harm yet. It is true, that sometimes awakened by my caresses" "Alas!" said she sighing, "there was no harm in that."

It was in vain that they recalled to memory all that had passed in the hut; they saw nothing but what was natural and innocent, nothing of which any body had any room to complain, nothing at which heaven could be incensed. "Yet that is all," said the shepherd; "where then is the crime? We are cousins, so much the worse; but if that does not hinder our loving, why ought it to hinder our marrying? Am I on that account less the father of my child? and you less its mother? Mark me, Annete! let them talk on: you depend on nobody, I am my own master: let us dispose of ourselves: every one does what he pleases with his own property. We shall have a child: so much the better. If it be

“ a daughter, she will be genteel and amiable
 “ like yourself; if it be a boy, he will be alert
 “ and joyous like his father. It will be a trea-
 “ sure to us both. We will try who can love
 “ him best; and say what they will, he will
 “ know his father and mother by the tender
 “ care we shall take of him.” It was in vain
 that Lubin talked sense and reason; Annete
 was not at ease, and her uneasiness redoubled
 every day. She did not comprehend the discourse
 of the bailiff, and this very obscurity rendered
 his reproaches and menaces more terrible.

Lubin, who saw her consuming herself
 with sorrow, said to her one morning, “ My
 “ dear Annete, your grief will kill me; re-
 “ turn to yourself, I beseech you. I have this
 “ night thought of an expedient which may
 “ relieve us. The parson told me, that if
 “ we were rich, the evil would be but half
 “ so great, and that by means of a good deal
 “ of money cousins drew themselves out of
 “ trouble; let us go and find out the lord of the
 “ manour: he is rich, and not proud: he is a
 “ father to us all: with him a shepherd is a
 “ man; and I have heard it said in the village,
 “ that he likes that they should get children.
 “ We will relate our adventure to him, and
 “ beg him to assist us in repairing the evil, if
 “ there be any.” “ What would you dare?”
 said the shepherdes.... “ Why not?” replied
 Lubin:

Lubin: "my lord is goodness itself, and we
 " should be the first unfortunate creatures
 " whom he would have left without succour."

Behold then Annete and Lubin directing
 their way towards the castle. They ask to
 speak with his lordship, and are permitted to
 appear. Annete, with her eyes fixed on the
 ground, and her hands placed one in another
 over her round little waist, makes a modest
 curtsy. Lubin makes a leg and pulls off his
 hat, with the simple grace of nature. "My
 " Lord," said he, "here is Annete big with
 " child, saving your presence, and it is I
 " alone who have done her that injury. Our
 " judge says that we ought to be married,
 " in order to get children; I desire him to
 " marry us. He says that is impossible, be-
 " cause we are cousins; but I think the thing
 " may be done, seeing that Annete is big
 " with child, and that it is not more difficult
 " to be a husband than a father. The bailiff
 " sends us to the devil, and we recommend
 " ourselves to you." The good man had
 much ado to withhold laughing at Lubin's
 harangue. "Children," says he, "the
 " bailiff is right. But take courage, and
 " tell me how the affair has happened."
 Annete, who had not thought Lubin's man-
 ner sufficiently touching, (for Nature teaches
 women the art of softening and gaining
 G 4 upon

upon men, and Cicero is but a novice to a young female petitioner) Annete then spoke. "Alas, my Lord," said she, "nothing is more plain or more natural than all that has happened to us. Lubin and I from our infancy kept sheep together: we carested one another while infants; and when we see one another continually, we grow up without perceiving it. Our parents are dead; we were alone in the world. If we love not one another, said I, who will love us? Lubin said the same. Leisure, curiosity, and I know not what besides, made us try every method of testifying that we loved one another; and you see what has befallen us. If I have done ill, I shall die with sorrow. All that I desire is, to bring my child into the world in order to console him when I shall be no more." "Ah, my Lord," said Lubin, bursting into tears, "prevent Annete from dying. I should die too, and that would be a pity. If you knew how we lived together! you should have seen us before this old bailiff struck terror into our souls: it was then who should be gayest. See now how pale and sorrowfull she is, she whose complexion could have defied all the flowers of the spring. What disheartens her most is, that they threaten her that her child will reproach
" her

"her with its birth." At these last words Annete was not able to contain her sobs. "He will come then," said she, "to reproach me in my grave. I only ask of heaven to live long enough to give him suck; and may I die the instant he has no need of his mother." At these words she covered her face with her apron, to hide the tears which overflowed it.

The wise and virtuous mortal, whose succour they implored, had too much sensibility not to be touched with this affecting scene. "Go, children," said he; "your innocence and love are equally respectable. If you were rich, you would obtain the permission of loving one another, and of being united. It is not just that your misfortune should be deemed a crime." He disdained not to write to Rome in their favour, and Benedict XIV. consented with pleasure that these lovers should be made man and wife.



THE SAMNITE MARRIAGES,

An antient ANECDOTE.

LET every legislator, who would assure himself of the hearts of men, begin by ranging the women on the side of the laws and manners; let him put virtue and glory under the guard of beauty, under the tutelage of love: without this agreement he is sure of nothing.

Such was the policy of the Samnites, that warlike republick which made Rome pass under the yoke, and was a long time her rival. What made a Samnite a warrior, a patriot, a man virtuous against every trial, was the care they took to attach to all these qualities the most valuable prize of love.

The ceremony of their marriages was celebrated every year in a wide place, destined for military exercises. All the youth who were of a sufficient age to give citizens to the republick, assembled on a solemn day. There the young men chose their wives, according to the rank which their virtues and their exploits had given them

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them in the annals of their country. We may easily conceive what a triumph this must be to those women who had the glory of being chosen by the conquerours, and how pride and love, those two springs of the human passions, gave force to virtues, on which all their success depended. They expected every year the ceremony of their marriages with a timid impatience: till then the young men and maidens of the Samnites never saw one another but in the temple, under the eyes of their mothers and prudent old men, with a modesty equally inviolable to both sexes. Indeed this austere confinement was no restraint to the desires: the eyes and heart made a choice; but it was to the children a religious and sacred duty to confide their inclination to the authours of their days; a secret of this sort divulged was the shame of a family. This intimate communication of the dearest sentiment of their soul, this tender disclosure, which it was not permitted them to give to their desires, their regrets, their fears, but in the respectable bosom of Nature, rendered a father and mother the friends, the consolers, the support of their children. The glory of some, the happiness of others, connected all the members of a family by the warmest interests of the human heart; and this society of pleasure and pain cemented by habitude,
and

and consecrated by duty, lasted till the grave. If the event did not answer their desires, an inclination which had not manifested itself abandoned its object so much the easier, as it would have been in vain to have pursued it with obstinacy, and there was a necessity for its giving place to the object of a new choice: for marriage was an act of duty in a citizen. The legislatour had wisely considered, that he who would not take a wife himself, depended in some measure on the wives of others; and in making a crime of adultery, he had made a duty of marriage. There was a necessity therefore of presenting themselves to the assembly as soon as they had attained the age pointed out by the laws, and of making a choice according to their rank, though it were not also according to their desires.

Among a warlike people, beauty, even in the weaker sex, has something fierce and noble, which favours of their manners. The chase was the most familiar amusement of the Samnite maidens; their skill in drawing the bow, their nimbleness in the race, are talents unknown among us. These exercises gave their persons a wonderfull ease, and their action a freedom full of graces. Unarmed, modesty was painted on their countenances; as soon as they had fastened on their quivers, their head was erected with a warlike assurance, and
courage

courage sparkled in their eyes. The beauty of the men had a majestick and serious character; and the image of battles, for ever present to their imaginations, gave to their looks a grave, commanding, and savage boldness. Amidst this warlike youth was distinguished, by the delicacy of his features, his sensible and tender air, the son of the brave Telespon, one of the old Samnites who had fought best for liberty. This old man, in resigning up his arms to the hands of his son, had said to him, "My son, I hear sometimes the old men, with an ill-natured raillery, telling me that I ought to clothe you like a woman, and that you would have made a pretty huntress. These railleries afflict your father; but he consoles himself in the hope that Nature has at least made no mistake in the heart which she has given you." "Take courage, my father," replied the young man, piqued with emulation; "these old men will perhaps be glad one day that their children follow my example: let them take me for a girl here, the Romans shall not be mistaken in me." Agatis kept his word with his father, and displayed in his first campaigns an intrepidity, an ardour which changed their railleries into encomiums. His companions said to one another with astonishment, "Who would have thought this effeminate
" body

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“ body was filled with so manly a courage &
 “ Cold, hunger, fatigue, nothing daunts
 “ him: with his touching and modest air he
 “ braves death full as well as we.”

One day, in presence of the enemy, Agatis seeing with composure a shower of arrows falling around him, “ You who are so handsome, “ how are you so brave?” said one of his companions, who was remarkable for his ugliness. At these words the signal for the attack was given. “ And you who are so ugly,” replied Agatis, “ will you now see which of “ us two shall carry off the standard of the “ battalion we are going to charge?” He said: both of them spring forward, and, in the midst of the carnage, Agatis appears with the standard in his hand.

However, he now approached the age wherein he was to enter himself in the number of married persons, and, in the quality of father, to obtain that of citizen. The young damsels, who heard of his valour with esteem, and saw his beauty with a soft emotion, envied each other his looks. One alone at last attracted them, the beautifull Cephalis.

In her were assembled in the highest degree that modesty and boldness, those noble and touching graces, which characterised the Samnite beauties. The laws, as I have said, had

had not forbid the eyes to speak; and the eyes of love are very eloquent, when it has no other language. If you have sometimes seen lovers constrained by the presence of a severe witness, do not you admire with what rapidity the whole soul unfolds itself in the lightening of one fugitive glance? A look of Agatis declared his trouble, his fears, his hope, and the emulation of virtue and glory with which love had just enflamed his heart. Cephalis seemed to forbid her eyes to meet those of Agatis; but her eyes were sometimes a little slow in obeying her, and were not cast downwards till after they had been answered. One day especially, and it was that which decided the triumph of her lover, one day her looks being fixed upon him, after remaining for some time immoveable, were turned up towards heaven with the most tender expression. “ Ah! I understand that wish,” said the young man in himself; “ I understand it, and I will accomplish it. Charming maiden, have I flattered myself too much? Did not your eyes, raised up to heaven, beseech it to render me deserving of choosing you? Well, heaven has listened to you, I feel it by the emotions of my soul. But, alas! all my rivals (and I shall have rivals without number) will dispute with me this honour: a brilliant action depends upon circumstances; should
“ any

“ any one happier than I attain it, he has the
 “ honour of the first choice; and the first
 “ choice, beautifull Cephalis, cannot but fall
 “ upon you.”

These ideas engaged his attention without remission: they engaged also the attention of his mistress. “ If Agatis had to choose,” said she, “ he would fix upon me; I dare believe it: I have observed him well, I have thoroughly read his soul. Whether he presents himself to my companions, or whether he speaks to them, he has not with them that complaisance, that sweet earnestness, which he betrays on seeing me. I perceive also that his voice, naturally soft and tender, has something still more sensible when he speaks to me. His eyes especially Oh! his eyes have said to me what they say to no one else; and would it had pleased the gods that he were the only one who distinguished me from the crowd! Yes, my dear Agatis, it would be a misfortune to seem handsome to any other than thee. What comparison between him and those youth who terrify me while they seek me out with their eyes! Their murderous air frightens me. Agatis is valiant, but has nothing ferocious in him; even under arms, we see in him I know not what that is moving. He will
 “ perform

“ perform prodigies of valour, I am sure;
 “ but, after all, if fortune betrays love, and
 “ if some other has the advantage . . . that
 “ thought chills me with terror.”

Cephalis dissembled not her fears to her mother. “ Put up vows,” said she to her, “ put
 “ up vows for Agatis’s glory; you will put
 “ them up for the happiness of your daughter.
 “ I think, I am sure he loves me; and
 “ can I not adore him? You know that he
 “ has the esteem of our elders; he is the idol
 “ of all my companions: I see their confusion,
 “ their blushes, their emotion at his
 “ approach: one word from his mouth fills
 “ them with pride.” “ Very well,” said her
 mother smiling, “ if he loves you, he will
 “ choose you.”—“ He would choose me,
 “ without doubt, if he had the right of choosing;
 “ but, my mother . . .”—“ But, my
 “ daughter, he will have his turn.” “ His
 “ turn, alas! it will be a pretty time,” replied
 Cephalis, fixing her eyes on the ground.—
 “ How, my daughter! Methinks to hear you,
 “ the word is, who shall have you! You
 “ flatter yourself a little.”—“ I do not flatter
 “ myself; I tremble; happy if I had known
 “ to please only him whom I shall always
 “ love!”

Agatis, on his side, the evening of the day
 on which he took the field, said to his father,
 embracing

embracing him, "Adieu, dear authour of
 " my life; either you see me for the last time,
 " or you shall see me again the most glorious
 " of all the sons of the Samnites."—"Well
 " said, my boy: thus it is that a well-born
 " son ought to take leave of his father. In
 " reality, I see thee animated with an ardour
 " that astonishes even myself; what propitious
 " deities inspire thee?"—"What deities, my
 " father? Nature and Love, the desire of
 " imitating you, and of meriting Cephalis."
 —"Oh! I understand; love is concerned in
 " it: there is no harm in that. Come, tell
 " me a little: I think I have sometimes dis-
 " tinguished your Cephalis among her com-
 " panions."—"Yes, my father, she is ea-
 " sily distinguished."—"But do you know
 " that she is very beautifull?"—"Beautifull!
 " beautifull as glory."—"I think I see her,"
 continued the old man, who took a delight in
 animating him; "I see in her the figure of
 " a nymph." "Ah! my father," cried
 Agatis, "you do a great deal of honour to
 " the nymphs."—"An elegant gait?"—
 "And still more noble."—"A fresh com-
 " plexion?"—"The rose itself."—"Long
 " tresses braided with grace?"—"And her
 " eyes, my father, her eyes? Oh! that you
 " had seen them, when lifted up to heaven
 " after being fixed on me, they prayed for
 " victory."

“ victory.”—“ You are right, she is all
 “ charming, but you will have rivals.”—
 “ Rivals! I have undoubtedly a thousand.”
 —“ They will carry her off from you.”—
 “ They will carry her off from me?”—“ To
 “ tell you the truth, I am afraid of it; these
 “ Samnites are very brave young fellows!”
 —“ Oh! let them be as brave as you please;
 “ that is not what disturbs me. Let them but
 “ give me an opportunity of meriting Cepha-
 “ lis, you shall hear of me.” Telespon, who
 till then had taken a delight in stimulating
 him, could no longer contain his tears. “ Ah!
 “ the rare present that heaven makes us,” said
 he, embracing him, “ when he gives us a
 “ sensible heart! It is the principle of all the
 “ virtues. My dear child, you overwhelm
 “ me with joy. There remains still in my
 “ veins sufficient to make one campaign; and
 “ you promise me such fine things, that I
 “ will make this along with you.”

The day of departure, according to custom,
 the whole army filed off before the young mai-
 dens, who were ranged on the spot, to ani-
 mate the warriors. The good old Telespon
 marched by his son's side. “ Ah, ah!” said
 the other old men, “ see Telespon is grown
 “ young again: where is he going then at
 “ his age?” “ To a wedding,” replied the
 good man, “ to a wedding.” Agatis made
 him

him remark Cephalis from afar, who towered above her companions with a grace perfectly celestial. His father, who had his eyes upon him, perceived, that, in passing before her, that sweet and serene countenance was enflamed with a martial ardour, and became terrible as the countenance of Mars. "Courage, my son," said he to him; "indulge thy passion, it becomes thee well."

Part of the campaign passed between the Samnites and the Romans in observing each other, without coming to any decisive action. The strength of the two states consisted in their armies; and the generals on both sides acted like able officers. However, the young Samnites, who were to marry, burned with impatience of coming to blows. "I have done nothing yet," said one, "worthy to be inscribed in the annals of the republick; I shall have the shame of hearing myself named without any eulogy to distinguish me." "What pity," said another, "that they vouchsafe not to offer us an opportunity of signalizing ourselves! I should have done wonders this campaign." "Our general," said the greater part, "will dishonour us in the eyes of our elders and wives. If he leads us back without fighting, they will have room to think that he mistrusted our valour."

But

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But the sage warriour, who was at their head, heard them unmoved. From his slowness and delays, he promised himself two advantages: one was to persuade the enemy that he was weak or fearfull, and to engage him, in this confidence, to an imprudent attack; the other, to suffer the impatience of his warriours to increase, and to carry their ardour to excess, before he risked a battle. Both these stratagems succeeded. The Roman general, haranguing his troops, pointed out to them the Samnites wavering, and ready to fly before them. "The genius of Rome triumphs," said he to them; "that of our enemies trembles, and is not able to sustain our approach. Come on, brave Romans; if we have not the advantage of ground, that of valour makes it up to us: it is ours; let us march." "There they are," said the Samnite general to his impatient youth; "let us suffer them to approach within bow-shot, and you shall then have all the liberty imaginable to deserve your wives."

The Romans advance; the Samnites wait them with firmness. "Let us fall upon them," said the Roman general; "a still body cannot sustain the impetuosity of that which runs upon them." On a sudden the Samnites themselves spring forward,

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ward, with the rapidity of courfers when the barrier is opened to them. The Romans halt; they receive the flock without being broken or difordered; and the skillfullnefs of their chief changes on a fudden the attack to a defence. They fought a long time with incredible obftinacy: to conceive it, we muft picture to ourfelves men who had no other paffions than love, nature, country, liberty, glory, defending in thofe decifive moments, all thofe interefts at once. In one of the redoubted attacks of the Samnites, old Telespon was dangerously wounded, as he fought by the fide of his fon. The youth, full of love for his father, feeing the Romans giving way in all parts, and thinking the battle won, purfued the invincible movement of nature, and drawing his father out of the tumult, helped him to drag himfelf to fome diftance from the place of combat. There, at the foot of a tree, he drefled, with tears, the deep wound of the venerable old man. While he was drawing the dart out of it, he heard near him the noife of a troop of Samnites, who had been repulfed. “ Whither are you going, my friends,” faid he to them, quitting his father! “ You fly! “ this is your way;” and perceiving the left wing of the Romans uncovered, “ Come “ on,” faid he, “ let us attack their flank: “ they are vanquifhed, if you but follow me.”

This rapid evolution struck terror into that wing of the Roman army; and Agatis, seeing them put to the rout, "Pursue," said he, "my friends, the road is open: I quit you for a moment, to go and assist my father." Victory at last decided for the Samnites, and the Romans, too much enfeebled by their losses, were obliged to retire within their walls.

Telephon had fainted away through pain. The cares of his son re-animated him. "Are they beaten?" demanded the old man. "They are putting the finishing stroke to it," said the young one: "things are in a good posture." "If so," said the old man smiling, "endeavour to recall me to life: it is sweet to conquerors; and I would see thee married." The good man, for a long time, had not strength to say more; for the blood, which had flowed from his wound, had reduced him to extremity.

The Samnites, after their victory, busied themselves the whole night in succouring the wounded: they spared no pains to save the worthy father of Agatis; and he recovered, though with some difficulty, of his weakness.

The return from the campaign was the time of their marriages, for two reasons: one, that the reward of services done their country might follow them close; and that the example might

might thence have more force: the other, that during the winter the young husbands might have time to give life to new citizens, before they went to expose their own. As the deeds of this glowing youth had been more brilliant than ever, they thought proper to give more pomp and splendour to the feast, which was to be their triumph.

There were few maidens in the state, who had not, like Cephalis, some communication of sentiments and desires with some one of the young men; and each of them put up vows for him whose choice she hoped to fix, if he should have it in his power to choose.

The place in which they were to assemble, was a vast amphitheatre, entered by triumphal arches, on which were seen hung up the spoils of the Romans. The young warriors were to repair there armed at all points; the the young maidens with their bow and quiver, and as well clad as the simplicity of a state, in which luxury was unknown, permitted. “Come, “daughters,” said the mothers, eager to adorn them, “you must present yourselves at this “august feast, with all the charms that heaven “has been pleased to grant you. The glory “of men is to conquer, that of women to “please. Happy those who shall merit the “wishes of these young and valiant citizens, “who are now going to be adjudged the most
 5 “worthy

“ worthy of giving defenders to the state!
 “ the palm of merit will shelter their habita-
 “ tion, the publick esteem will surround it.
 “ Their children will be the elder sons of
 “ their country, and its most precious hope.”

While they spoke thus, these tender mothers interweaved with vine leaves and myrtle the beautifull tresses of these young virgins, and gave to the foldings of their veil that air and turn which was most favourable to the character of their beauty. From the knots of the girdle beneath the bosom, they created waves of the most elegant drapery; fixed the quiver on their shoulders; instructed them to present themselves with grace, leaning on the bow; and threw back their light robe negligently, above one of their knees, in order to give their gait more ease and majesty. This industry of the Samnite mothers was an act of piety; and gallantry itself, employed in the triumph of virtue, assumed the sacred character of it. The maidens, admiring themselves in the crystal of the pure wave, never thought themselves sufficiently handsome; each of them exaggerated the advantages of her rivals, and dared no longer reckon upon her own.

But of all the wishes formed in that great day, there were none more ardent than those of the beautifull Cephalis. “ May the gods grant
 “ us our prayers,” said her mother to her, em-

bracing her; "but, my daughter, wait their
 "will with the submission of an humble heart;
 "if they have given you some charms, they
 "know what value to set upon them. It is
 "for you to crown their gifts with the graces
 "of modesty. Without modesty, beauty may
 "dazzle, but will never touch the heart. It
 "is by this that it inspires a tender veneration,
 "and obtains a kind of worship. Let
 "this amiable modesty serve as a veil to desires,
 "which, perhaps, may become extinct
 "before the day closes, and give place to a
 "new inclination." Cephalis was not able to
 bear this idea without letting fall some tears.
 "These tears," said her mother to her, "are
 "unworthy a Samnite maiden. Learn that
 "of all the young warriors now about to assemble,
 "there is not one but has lavished
 "his blood for our defense, and our liberty;
 "that there is not one of them but merits you,
 "and towards whom you ought to be proud
 "of paying the debt due from your country.
 "Think of that, dry up your tears, and follow
 "me."

On his side, the good old Telespon conducted his son to the assembly. "Well," said he, "how goes the heart?" I have been sufficiently pleased with you this campaign,
 "and I hope they will speak well of it."

"Alas!"

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“ Alas !” said the tender and modest Agatis,
“ I had but a moment for myself. I should
“ perhaps have done something ; but you were
“ wounded. I owed all my attention to you.
“ I do not reproach myself for having sacrificed
“ my glory to you : I should be inconsolable for
“ having betrayed my country ; but I should
“ have been no less so for having abandoned my
“ father. Thank heaven, my duties were not
“ incompatible ; the rest is in the hand of the
“ gods.” “ How religious we are, when
“ we are afraid !” said the old man, smiling :
“ confess that you were more resolute, when
“ you went out to charge the Romans ; but
“ take courage, all will go well : I promise
“ you a handsome wife.”

They repair to the assembly, where several generations of citizens, ranged in amphitheatre, formed a most awefull sight. The circuit rounded off into an oval. On one side were seen the daughters at the feet of their mothers ; on the other side, the fathers ranged above their sons : at one end sat the counsel of old men ; at the other the youth not yet marriageable, placed according to the degrees of their age. The new-married pairs of the preceding years crowned the circle. Respect, modesty, and silence, reigned throughout. This silence was suddenly interrupted by the noise of warlike instruments,

and the Samnite general was seen to enter environed with heroes, who commanded under him. His presence made all the assembly look down. He traverses the circuit, and goes to place himself with his retinue in the midst of the sages.

The annals of the republick are opened, and a herald reads with a loud voice, according to the order of time, the testimony which the magistrates and generals had paid to the behaviour of the young warriors. He, who by any cowardice or baseness had set a blot upon his name, was condemned by the laws to the infamous punishment of celibacy, till he had redeemed his honour by some brave action: but nothing was more rare than such examples. A plain honesty, an irreproachable bravery, was the least praise that could be given a young Samnite; and it was a kind of shame to have done only one's duty. The greater part amongst them had given proofs of a courage, a virtue, which every where else would be deemed heroick, but which in the manners of that people were hardly to be distinguished, so familiar were they. Some of them raised themselves above their rivals by actions that were striking; but the judgement of the spectators became more severe in proportion as they received the report of virtues still more worthy of commendation; and those which had
had

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had at first struck them, were effaced by greater strokes. The first campaigns of Agatis were of this number; but when they came to the recital of the last battle, and it was related how he had abandoned his father to rally his companions, and lead them back to the fight; this sacrifice of nature to his country carried all their suffrages: the tears ran from the eyes of the old men: those who surrounded Telephon embraced him with joy, those at a greater distance congratulated him by gesture and look: the good man smiled and burst into tears; the very rivals of his son viewed him with respect; and the mothers, pressing their daughters in their arms, wished them Agatis for their husband. Cephalis, pale and trembling, dares not lift up her eyes: her heart, filled with joy and fear, had suspended its motion; her mother, who supported her on her knees, dares not speak to her for fear of betraying her, and thinks she sees all eyes fixed upon her.

As soon as the murmur of the universal applause was appeased, the herald names Parmeno, and relates, that in the last battle, the courser of the Samnite general being thrown down under him, transfix'd by a deadly shaft, and the hero in his fall being for a moment defenseless, a Roman soldier was on the point

of piercing him with his javelin; when Parmeno, to save the chief's life, had exposed his own, by throwing himself before the blow, from which he had received a deep wound.

"It is certain," said the general, addressing himself to the assembly, "that this brave

"citizen made a buckler for me with his body;

"and if my life be of service to my country,

"it is a gift of Parmeno's." At these words

the assembly, less moved, but not less astonished

at Parmeno's courage than that of Agatis, be-

stowed upon him the same eulogies; and the

suffrages and good wishes were now divided

between those two rivals: the herald, by order

of the elders, commands silence; and those

venerable judges get up to deliberate. Their

opinions are opposed to each other for a long

time with equal advantage. Some of them

pretended, that Agatis ought not to have

quitted his post to assist his father, and that he

had done nothing but repair this fault by

abandoning his father to rally his companions;

but this unnatural sentiment was espoused by

very few. The most aged of the elders then

spoke and said, "Is it not virtue that we are

"to recompense? The point then is only to

"know which of these two emotions is the

"most virtuous; to abandon a dying father,

"or to expose one's own life. Our young

"warriours have both of them performed

"an

“ an action decisive with respect to the
 “ victory: it is for you, virtuous citizens,
 “ to judge which of the two it must have cost
 “ most. Of two examples equally serviceable,
 “ the most painfull is that which must be most
 “ encouraged.”

Will it be believed of the manners of this people? It was decided with one voice, that it was braver to tear one's self from the arms of a dying father whom we could succour, than to expose one's self to death, even though it were inevitable; and all the suffrages concurred in decreeing to Agatis the honour of the first choice. But the contest about to arise will appear still less probable. Their deliberations were carried on aloud; and Agatis had heard that the principle of generosity alone made the balance incline in his favour. There arose in his soul a reproach which made him ashamed: “ No,” said he in himself, “ it is a surprise, I ought not to make “ an ill use of it.” He asks leave to speak; they attend in silence: “ A triumph which I “ have not merited,” said he, “ would be “ the torment of my life; and in the arms of “ my virtuous spouse, my happiness would “ be embittered by the crime of having ob- “ tained her unjustly. You think you crown “ in me the person who has done most for his “ country; ye wise Samnites, I must confess,

“ that what I did, was not entirely done for
 “ that alone. I love, I longed to merit what
 “ I love; and if there is any glory redounds to
 “ me from a conduct which you vouchsafe to
 “ commend, love divides it with virtue. Let
 “ my rival judge himself, and let him receive
 “ the prize which I yield to him, if he has
 “ been more generous than I.” How is it
 possible to express the emotion which this confession caused in all hearts? On one side it tarnished the lustre of the actions of this young man; and on the other it gave to the character of his virtue something more heroick, more surprising, more uncommon, than the most noble devotion of life. This stroke of frankness and candour produced, with regard to these young rivals, two very opposite effects. Some, admiring them with an undisguised joy, seemed to testify, by a noble assurance, that this example raised them above themselves; others, lost and confused, appeared to be overwhelmed, as by a weight above their strength. The matrons and virgins, in their hearts, unanimously gave the prize of virtue to him who had the magnanimity to declare, that he was not worthy of it; and the elders had their eyes fixed on Parmeno, who, with a composed countenance, waited till they should deign to hear him. “ I know
 “ not,” said he at last, addressing himself to Agatis, “ I know not to what degree the ac-
 “ tions

" tions of men ought to be disinterested, in
 " order to be virtuous. There is nothing,
 " strictly speaking, but is done for our own
 " satisfaction; but what I should not have
 " done for mine, is the confession I have just
 " heard; and even supposing that there may
 " have been hitherto something more brave in
 " my conduct than in yours, which is a point
 " yet undecided, the severity with which you
 " have just now judged yourself, raises you
 " above me."

Here the elders, confounded, knew not which
 side to take: they had not even recourse to
 voices, in order to determine to whom to give
 the prize. It was decided by acclamation,
 that both of them merited it, and the honour
 of the second choice was now unworthy either of
 one or the other. The most aged of the judges
 spoke again: " Why delay," said he, " by
 " our irresolutions, the happiness of our young
 " people? Their choice is made in the bot-
 " tom of their hearts, let them be permitted
 " to communicate one to the other the secret
 " of their desires: if the object of them be
 " different, each, without precedency, will
 " obtain the wife he loves; if it happen that
 " they are rivals, the law of chance shall
 " decide it; and there is no Samnite maiden
 " but may glory in consoling the less success-
 " full of these two warriors." Thus spoke

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the venerable Androgeus, and all the assembly
applauded.

They cause Agatis and Parmeno to advance
to the middle of the circus. They begin by
embracing each other, and all eyes are be-
dewed with tears. Trembling each, they
hesitate; they are afraid to name the wife of
their desires; neither of them thinks it pos-
sible that the other can have made a choice
different from his own. "I love," said Par-
meno, "the most accomplished of heaven's
works; grace and beauty itself." "Alas!"
replied Agatis, "you love her whom I adore:
it is naming her, to paint her thus; the
nobleness of her features, the gentle fire
of her looks, I know not what of divinity
in her shape and gait, sufficiently distin-
guish her from the crowd of Samnite mai-
dens. How unhappy will one of us be,
reduced to another choice!" "You say
true," replied Parmeno; "there is no
happiness without Eliana."—"Eliana, say
you?" "What!" cried Agatis, "is it
the daughter of the wife Androgeus, Eliana,
whom you love?"—"And who then should
I love?" said Parmeno, astonished at the
joy of his rival.—"Eliana! not Cephalis!"
resumed Agatis with transport. "Ah! if so,
we are happy: embrace me, you restore me
to life." By their embraces it was easy to
judge

judge that they were reconciled about their love. The elders ordered them to draw near, and, if their choice was not the same, to declare it aloud. At the names of Eliana and Cephalis the whole amphitheatre resounded with shouts of applause. Androgeus and Telespon, the brave Eumenes, father of Cephalis, Parmeno's father, Melante, felicitated each other with that melting tenderness which mingles in the joy of old men. "My friends," said Telespon, "we have brave children there: with what ardour are they going to beget others! When I think of it, I imagine myself to be still in the flower of my age. Paternal weakness apart, the day of marriages is a festival to me: I think it is I who marry all the virgins of the commonwealth." While he spoke thus, the good man leaped with joy; and as he was a widower, they advised him to put himself again into the ranks. "No raillery," said he; "if I were always as young, I might yet do something to speak of."

They repaired to the temple to consecrate at the foot of the altar the ceremony of the marriages. Parmeno and Agatis were conducted together in triumph; and there was ordered a solemn sacrifice, to return thanks to the gods for having given to the republick two such virtuous citizens.

T H E



THE GOOD HUSBAND.

FELISONDE, one of those good fathers of a family who recall the golden age to our minds, had married his only daughter, Hortensia, to the Baron de Valfain, and his niece Amelia to the President de Lufane.

Valfain, gallant without affiduity, sufficiently tender without jealousy, too much taken up about his own glory and advancement to make himself the guardian of his wife, had left her, upon the strength of her own virtue, to deliver herself up to the dissipations of a world, in which being launched himself, he took a delight in seeing her shine. Lufane, more retired, more assiduous, breathed only for Amelia, who, on her side, lived but for him. The mutual care of pleasing was their constant employment, and to them the most sacred of duties was the sweetest of pleasures.

Old Felifonde was enjoying the union of his family, when the deaths of Amelia and Valfain diffused sorrow and mourning over it. Lufane in his grief had not even the consolation of being a father: Valfain left Hortensia

two children with very little to support them. The first sorrows of the young widow were only her husband; but we forget ourselves in vain, we return thither insensibly. The time of mourning was that of reflexion.

At Paris, a young woman, resigned to dissipation, is exempt from censure as long as she is in the power of a husband: they suppose that the person most interested ought to be the most rigid, and what he approves they dare not blame; but, delivered up to herself, she falls again under the tutelage of a severe and jealous publick, and it is not at twenty-two that widowhood is a free state. Hortensia then saw clearly that she was too young to depend only on herself, and Felisonde saw it still clearer. One day this good father communicated his fears to his nephew Lusane. "My friend," said he, "you are much to be pityed, but I am still more so. I have but one daughter, you know how I love her, and you see the dangers that she runs. The world, which has seduced her, invites her back again; her mourning over, she will resign herself to it; and I am afraid, old as I am, I may live long enough to have occasion to be ashamed. My daughter has a fund of virtue; but our virtue is within ourselves, and our honour, that honour so dear, is placed in the opinion of others."

"I un-

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“ I understand you, Sir, and to say the
 “ truth, I share your uneasiness. But can
 “ we not engage Hortensia to a new match ?”
 —“ Ha, my friend ! what reasons she has to
 “ oppose me ! two children, two children
 “ without fortune ; for you know that I am
 “ not rich, and that their father was ruined.”
 —“ No matter, Sir, consult Hortensia : I
 “ know a man, if it should be agreeable to
 “ her, who thinks justly enough, who has a
 “ heart good enough to serve as a father to her
 “ children.” The good old man thought he
 understood him. “ O you,” said he to him,
 “ who formed the happiness of my niece Ame-
 “ lia, you whom I love as my own son ;
 “ Lufane ! heaven reads in my heart But
 “ tell me, does the husband whom you pro-
 “ pose know my daughter ? Is not he afraid
 “ of her youth, her levity, the flight she has
 “ taken in the world ?” —“ He knows her as
 “ well as you do, and he esteems her no less.”
 Felisonde delayed not to speak to his daughter.
 “ Yes, my father, I agree,” said she, “ that
 “ my situation is delicate. To be observant
 “ of one’s self, to be afraid of one’s self with-
 “ out ceasing, to be in the world as before
 “ one’s judge, is the lot of a widow at my
 “ age : it is painfull and dangerous.” —“ Well
 “ then, daughter, Lufane has talked to me
 “ of a husband who would suit you.” —“ Lu-
 “ fane,

“ sane, my father! Ah, if it be possible,
 “ let him give me one like himself. Happy as
 “ I was myself with Valsain, I could not
 “ help envying sometimes the lot of his wife.”
 The father, transported with her answer, went
 to give an account of it to his nephew. “ If
 “ you do not flatter me,” said Lufane, “ to-
 “ morrow we shall all be happy.”—“ What,
 “ my friend, is it you?”—“ I myself.”—
 “ Alas! my heart had told me so.”—“ Yes,
 “ it is I, Sir, who would console your
 “ old age, by bringing back to her duty a
 “ daughter worthy of you. Without giving
 “ into indecent extravagancies, I see that Hor-
 “ tensia has assumed all the airs, all the fol-
 “ lies of a woman of fashion. Vivacity, ca-
 “ price, the desire of pleasing and of amuse-
 “ ments, have engaged her in the labyrinth of
 “ a noisy and frivolous acquaintance; the
 “ point is to withdraw her from it. To do
 “ that, I have occasion for a little courage and
 “ resolution: I shall have tears perhaps to
 “ contend with, and that is much for a heart
 “ so sensible as mine; nevertheless I can an-
 “ swer for myself. But you, Sir, you are a
 “ father; and if Hortensia should come to
 “ complain to you....” “ Fear nothing;
 “ dispose of my daughter: I confide her to
 “ thy virtue; and if the authority of a hus-
 “ band

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“band be not enough, I resign to you that of
“a father.”

Lufane was received by Hortensia with the most touching graces: “Think that you see
“in me,” said she to him, “the wife that you
“have lost; if I take her place in your heart,
“I have nothing to regret.”

When they came to draw up the articles,
“Sir,” said Lufane to Felisonde, “let us
“not forget that we have two orphans. Their
“father’s estate has not permitted him to leave
“them a large inheritance; let us not deprive
“them of their mother’s, nor let the birth of
“my children be a misfortune to them.” The
old man was moved even to weeping with the
generosity of his nephew, whom he called from
that moment his son. Hortensia was not less
sensible to the proceedings of her new husband.
The most elegant equipage, the richest clothes,
the most precious trinkets, a house in which
every thing breathed taste, elegance, wealth,
proclaimed to this young lady a husband atten-
tive to all her pleasures. But the joy she felt
was not of long duration.

As soon as a calm had succeeded to the tu-
mult of the wedding, Lufane thought it his
duty to come to an explanation with her on the
plan of life which he wanted to trace out to her.
He took for this serious discourse the peacefull
moment of her waking; that moment in which
the

the silence of the senses leaves the reason its perfect freedom, wherein the soul herself, lulled by the trance of sleep, seems to revive with pure ideas, and being wholly mistress of herself, contemplates herself, and reads in her own bosom, as we see to the bottom of a clear and smooth water.

“ My dear Hortensia,” said he to her, “ I want you to be happy, and to be always so. But it will cost you some slight sacrifices, and I had much rather ask them plainly of you, than engage you to them by indirect methods, which would show distrust.

“ You have passed with the Baron de Valsain some agreeable years. Made for the world, and for pleasures, young, brilliant and dissipated himself, he inspired you with all his tastes. My character is more serious, my condition more modest, my temper a little more severe ; it is not possible for me to assume his manners, and I believe it is the better for you. The path you have yet followed is strewed with flowers and snares ; that which we are going to pursue has fewer attractions and fewer dangers. The charm which surrounded you would have been dissipated with youth ; the serene days I prepare for you will be the same in all seasons. It is not in the midst of the world that an honest woman finds happiness ; it is in the
“ midst

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“ midst of her own family, in the love of her
 “ duties, the care of her children, and the
 “ intimate commerce of a worthy set of ac-
 “ quaintance.”

This preamble gave Hortensia some surprise; above all, the word *family* startled her ear; but assuming a tone of raillery, “ I shall become
 “ perhaps, some day or other,” said she, “ an
 “ excellent manager of a family; at present I
 “ know nothing of it. My duty is to love
 “ you, I fulfill it; my children do not yet
 “ want me: as to my acquaintance, you know
 “ that I see none but genteel people.”—“ Let
 “ us not confound, my dear, genteel people
 “ with good people.”—“ I understand your
 “ distinction; but in point of acquaintances
 “ we ought not to be so difficult. The world,
 “ such as it is, amuses me, and the way of
 “ living in it has nothing incompatible with
 “ the decency of your condition: it is not I
 “ who wear the robe, and I do not see why
 “ Madam Lusane should be more obliged to
 “ be a mope than Madam de Valsain. Be
 “ then, my dear President, as grave as you
 “ please; but do not take it amiss that your
 “ wife be giddy a few years longer: every age
 “ will bring its likings along with it.” “ It is
 “ pity,” replied Lusane, “ to bring you back
 “ to seriousness, for you are a charming tri-
 “ fler. There is a necessity, however, for
 “ talk-

“ talking reason to you. In the world do you
 “ love without distinction every thing that
 “ composes it ? ” — “ Not separately ; but the
 “ medley pleases me well enough all together.”
 — “ What of the dealers in scandal, for in-
 “ stance ? ” — “ The scandal-mongers have
 “ their charms.” — “ They give a ridiculous
 “ turn to the plainest things, a criminal air
 “ to the most innocent, and publish, with ex-
 “ aggeration, the foibles or irregularities of
 “ those whom they have just flattered.” — “ It
 “ is true, that at the first glance we are fright-
 “ ened at these characters, but at bottom they
 “ are very little dangerous : from the moment
 “ that we rail at all the world, railing does
 “ no harm : it is a species of contagion which
 “ weakens in proportion as it extends itself.”
 — “ And those fops, whose very looks are an
 “ insult to a virtuous woman, and whose con-
 “ versation dishonours her, what say you to
 “ them ? ” — “ One never believes them.” —
 “ I would not imitate them in speaking ill of
 “ your sex : there are many valuable women,
 “ I know, but there are . . . ! ” — “ Just as it is
 “ amongst you, a mixture of virtues and vices.”
 — “ Very well ; and what prevents our making
 “ a choice in this mixture ? ” — “ We *do* make
 “ one for intimacy, but in the world we live
 “ with the world.” — “ But I, my dear, I
 “ would live only with people, who by their
 “ man-

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“manners and character are deserving to be
 “my friends.” — “Your friends, Sir, your
 “friends! and how many of them have we
 “in life?” — “A great many, when we are
 “worthy, and know how to cultivate them.
 “I speak not of that generous friendship, the
 “devotion of which proceeds almost to he-
 “roism; I call those friends who come to me
 “with the desire of finding joy and peace, dis-
 “posed to pardon my foibles, to conceal them
 “from the eyes of the publick, to treat me
 “when present with frankness, when absent
 “with tenderness. Such friends are not so
 “rare, and I presume to hope that I shall have
 “such.” — “With all my heart, we will intro-
 “duce our several acquaintance to each other.”
 — “I will not have two sets of acquaint-
 “ance.” — “What, Sir, will not your door
 “be open?” — “Open to my friends, always;
 “to every comer, never, I give you my
 “word.” — “No, Sir, I will not suffer you
 “to revolt against the publick by odious dis-
 “tinctions. We may not love the world, but
 “we ought to fear it, and not offend it.” —
 “Oh, be easy, my dear; that is my concern:
 “they will say that I am a brute, jealous, per-
 “haps; that signifies little to me.” — “It
 “signifies to me. I would have my husband
 “be respected, and not have cause to reproach
 “me with having made him the town-talk.

“Form-

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“ Form your own company as you shall think
“ proper, but leave me to cultivate my old ac-
“ quaintance, and prevent the court and town
“ from letting their tongues loose upon you.”

Lufane admired the address of a young wo-
man in defending her liberty. “ My dear Hor-
“ tensia,” said he to her, “ it is not, as a
“ whim, that I have taken my resolution: it
“ is upon thorough consideration you may be-
“ lieve me, and nothing in the world can
“ change it. Choose, among the persons whom
“ you see, such a number of decent women
“ and prudent men as you shall think proper,
“ my house shall be theirs; but that choice
“ made, take leave of the rest. I will join my
“ friends to your’s: our two lists united shall
“ be deposited with my porter for his constant
“ rule; and if he deviates from it, he shall be
“ discharged. This is the plan I propose to
“ myself, and which I wanted to communicate
“ to you.”

Hortensia remained confounded at seeing all
her fine projects vanish in a moment. She
could not believe that it was Lufane, that gen-
tle and complaisant man, who had just been talk-
ing to her. “ After this,” said she, “ who can
“ trust men? see the tone this man assumes!
“ with what composure he dictates his will to
“ me! To see only virtuous women, and ac-
“ complished men! a fine chimera! And then

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“ the amusing society which this circle of re-
 “ spectable friends must afford ! *Such is my*
 “ *plan*, said he, as if there was nothing but
 “ to obey when he had said it. See how
 “ we spoil them. My cousin was a good lit-
 “ tle woman, who moped as much as he plea-
 “ sed. She was as happy as a queen the mo-
 “ ment her husband deigned to smile upon her,
 “ and quite transported with one caress, she
 “ would come to me and boast of him as a di-
 “ vinity. He believes, without doubt, that
 “ according to her example I shall have no-
 “ thing else to do but to please him ; he is
 “ mistaken, and if he intends to put me in
 “ leading-strings, I will let him see that I am
 “ no longer a child.”

From that moment, to the joyous, free and
 endearing manner which she had observed with
 Lufane, succeeded a cold and reserved air, which
 he saw plain enough, but took no notice of it
 to her. She had not failed to make her mar-
 riage known to that swarm of slight acquain-
 tance, who are called friends. They came in
 crowds to congratulate her, and Lufane could
 not decline returning with her those visits of
 ceremony ; but he infused into his politeness
 such striking distinctions, that it was not dif-
 ficult for Hortensia to discern those whom he
 wished to see again.

In

A MORAL TALE. 191

In this number was not included one Olympia, who, with a sovereign contempt for the opinion of the publick, pretends that every thing which pleases is right, and joins the example to the precept; nor one Climene, who does not know why a woman should make any scruple to change her lovers when she is tired of the man she has taken, and thinks the timid precautions of secrecy too much beneath her quality. In this number were not included those smart toilette and scene hunters, who leading in Paris a life of idleness and inutility, **grubs in the morning, and butterflies in the evening*, pass one half of their time in having nothing to do, and the other half in doing nothing; nor those obliging gentry by profession, who having no personal existence in the world, attach themselves to a handsome woman to pass for one of her dangles, and who ruin her in order to support themselves.

Hortensia retired to her own apartment uneasy and pensive. She thought she saw herself on the point of being deprived of every thing that makes life agreeable: vanity, a taste for pleasure, the love of liberty, every thing revolted

* *Grubs in the morning, and butterflies in the evening.*] *Cbenilles le matin, & papillons le soir.* The humour of this passage, being in some degree local, cannot be entirely preserved in the translation. It is an allusion to dress, *En chenille* being at Paris a common cant phrase for a morning dishabille.

volted against the empire which her husband wanted to assume. However, having armed herself with resolution, she thought it her duty to dissemble for a time, the better to choose the moment of breaking out.

The next day Lusane asked her if she had made out her list. "No, Sir," said she, "I have not, and shall not make any." "Here is mine," continued he, without any discomposure: "see, if in the number of your friends and of mine I have forgot any one you like, and that is fit for us."—"I have told you, Sir, that I shall not meddle in your arrangements, and I beg of you once for all not to interfere in mine. If our acquaintance do not suit, let us do like all the rest of the world: let us divide them without constraining ourselves. Have those whom you like to dinner; I will have those whom I like to supper."—"Ah my dear Hortensia! what you propose to me is far from my principles! Do not think of it: never in my house shall such a custom take place. I will make it as agreeable as I can to you; but no distinction, if you please, between your friends and mine. This evening all whom this list contains are invited to sup with you. Receive them well, I beseech you, and prepare yourself to live with them." At these words he retired, leaving the

the list for Hortensia to peruse. "There," said she, "his law is laid down!" And running it over, she was encouraging herself not to submit to it, when the Countess de Fierville, Valsain's aunt, came to see her, and found her with tears in her eyes. This haughty woman had taken Hortensia into her friendship, and as she flattered her inclinations, had gained her confidence. The young lady, whose heart stood in need of consolation, told her the cause of her chagrin. "How! what," cried the Countess, "after having had the folly to dispose of yourself so unsuitably, will you also be so weak as to degrade yourself? You a slave! and to whom? a man of the robe! Remember that you have had the honour to be Madam de Valsain." Hortensia was now ashamed of having had the weakness to expose her husband. "Though he might be in the wrong," said she, "that should not hinder me from respecting him: he is the honestest man in the world, and what he has done for my children."—"An honest man! and who is not so? That is a merit to be met with in every street. And what has this honest man done so wonderfull for your children? He has not robbed them of their fortune. To be sure it would have been worth while to have abused your father's weakness! No, Madam, he has not

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“acquired the right of talking so magisteri-
 ally. Let him preside in his own court,
 “but leave you to command at home.” At
 these words Lufane entered. “In my house,
 “Madam, it is neither my wife nor I that
 “commands, it is reason; and probably it is
 “not you that she will choose for an arbitress.”
 “No, Sir,” replied the Countess with a
 commanding tone, “it is not for you to
 “make laws for this lady. You have heard
 “me, and I am glad of it: you know my
 “opinion of the absurdity of your proceed-
 “ings.” “Madam,” replied Lufane, “if
 “I were as wrong as you suppose me, I am
 “not to be corrected by affronts. Gentleness
 “and modesty are the arms of your sex, and
 “Hortensia by herself is much more powerfull
 “than with your assistance. Leave our
 “agreements to ourselves, since that we
 “are the persons who must live together.
 “Though you should have rendered her duties
 “odious to her, you could not have dispensed
 “with her fulfilling them; though you should
 “have made her lose the confidence and friend-
 “ship of her husband, you could not have
 “made her amends for them. Spare her that
 “advice which she neither will nor ought to
 “follow. To another they might have been
 “dangerous; to her, thank heaven, they are
 “only useless. Hortensia,” added he going,
 “you

“ you have not desired to give me uneasiness,
 “ but let this serve you as a lesson.” “ See
 “ how you defend yourself !” said Madam de
 Fierville to Hortensia, who had not even dared
 to lift up her eyes. “ Obey, my dear, obey.
 “ It is the portion of weak souls. Good hea-
 “ ven !” said she going out, “ I am the gen-
 “ tlest, the most virtuous woman on the face
 “ of the earth; but if a husband had dared to
 “ treat me thus, I should have taken an hand-
 “ some revenge of him.” Hortensia had scarce
 strength enough to get up to attend Madam de
 Fierville, so great was her terroure and confu-
 sion. She perceived the advantage that her
 Imprudence gave her husband; but far from
 availing himself of it, he did not even so much
 as reproach her with it, and his delicacy pu-
 nished her more than his resentment would
 have done.

In the evening, the visitors being assembled,
 Lusane seized the moment when his wife was
 yet in her own apartment. “ Here,” said he
 to them, “ is the rendezvous of friendship: if
 “ you like it, come often, and let us pass
 “ our life together.” They all replied with
 one voice, that they desired nothing bet-
 ter. “ There,” continued he, presenting to
 them the good Felisonde, “ there is our wor-
 “ thy and tender father, who will be the soul
 “ of our pleasures. At his age, joy has some-

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“ thing more sensible and tender in it than in
 “ youth, and nothing is more amiable than
 “ an amiable old man. He has a daughter
 “ whom I love, and whom I would make hap-
 “ py. Assist me, my friends, to keep her
 “ among us, and let love, nature, and friend-
 “ ship conspire to render her house every day
 “ more agreeable to her. She entertains for
 “ the world the prepossessions of her age; but
 “ when she shall have tasted the charms of a
 “ virtuous society, this vain world will touch
 “ her but little.” While Lufane spoke thus,
 old Felisonde could not refrain letting fall some
 tears; “ O my friend,” said he clasping him
 in his arms, “ happy the father who at his
 “ death can leave his daughter in such good
 “ hands!”

The instant after arrived Madam de Lufane.
 All hearts flew out to meet her; but her own
 was not easy. She disguised her ill temper un-
 der the reserved air of ceremony, and her po-
 liteness, though grave, still appeared amiable
 and touching; such a gift have the natural
 graces of embellishing every thing.

They played. Lufane made Hortensia ob-
 serve that all his company played low. “ It
 “ is,” said he, “ the way to maintain union
 “ and joy. High play prepossesses and alienates
 “ our minds: it afflicts those who lose, it im-
 “ poses on those who win the duty of being
 “ grave,

“grave, and I think it incompatible with the
 “openness of friendship.” The supper was
 delicious: transport and good-humour were
 diffused round the table. The heart and the
 mind were at ease: the gallantry was such as
 modesty might smile at, and neither decency
 nor liberty were under restraint.

Hortensia in another situation would have
 relished these tranquill pleasures, but the idea
 of constraint which she attached to them em-
 bittered their sweetness.

The day after, Lufane was surprised to find
 her of a freer and pleasanter air: he suspected
 that she had taken some new resolution.
 “What shall we do to-day?” said he. “I
 “am going to the play,” said she, “and I
 “shall come home to supper.”—“Very well,
 “and who are the ladies you are going with?”
 —“Two of Valsain’s friends, Olympia and
 “Artenice.” “It is cruel to me,” said the
 husband, “to be obliged to give you uneasiness
 “continually; but why, Hortensia, will you
 “expose me to it? Do you think me so incon-
 “sistent in the principles I have laid down, as
 “to consent that you should be seen in publick
 “with those women?”—“To be sure you
 “must consent to it, for the party is settled,
 “and I shall certainly not fail in it.”—“Par-
 “don me, Madam, you shall fail in it, that
 “you may not fail in the regard due to your-

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“ self.” — “ Is it failing in regard to myself to
 “ see women whom all the world sees ? ” —
 “ Yes, it is to expose yourself to be confound-
 “ ed with them in the opinion of the publick.”
 — “ The publick, Sir, is not unjust, and in
 “ the world all persons answer for themselves.”
 — “ The publick, Madam, supposes with
 “ reason that those who are allyed in pleasures,
 “ are allyed in manners, and you ought not to
 “ have any thing in common with Olympia
 “ and Artenice. If you would not break off
 “ with them too abruptly, there is a way :
 “ excuse yourself only from the play, and in-
 “ vite them to supper : my door shall be shut
 “ against all my friends, and we will be alone
 “ with them.” “ No, Sir, no,” said she to
 him with ill-humour, “ I will not abuse
 “ your complaisance ; ” and she writ to disen-
 gage herself. Nothing had cost her so much as
 this billet : tears of anger bedewed it. “ To
 “ be sure,” said she, “ I care very little for
 “ these women ; the play interests me still less :
 “ but to see one’s self opposed in every thing !
 “ never to have a will of one’s own ! to be sub-
 “ jected to that of another ! to hear him dic-
 “ tating his laws to me with an insulting tran-
 “ quillity ! that is what drives me mad, and
 “ what will make me capable of every thing.”

It was certain, however, that the tran-
 quillity of Lufane was far from having an in-
 sulting

sulting air, and it was easy to see that he did violence to himself. His father-in-law, who came to sup with him, perceived the melancholy into which he was plunged. “ Ah! Sir,” said Lusane to him, “ I see that I have entered in-
 “ to an engagement with you very painfull to
 “ fulfill.” He told him what had happened.
 “ Courage, my friend,” said this good fa-
 “ ther to him; “ let us not be discouraged;
 “ if it pleases heaven, you will render her
 “ worthy your cares and love. In pity to me,
 “ in pity to my daughter, maintain your re-
 “ solution. I am going to see her, and if she
 “ complain”—“ If she complain, con-
 “ sole her, Sir, and appear sensible to her grief:
 “ her reason will be more tractable when her
 “ heart is comforted. Let her hate me just at
 “ present; I expected it, and am not surprised
 “ at it; but if the bitterness of her temper
 “ should alter the sentiments of Nature in her
 “ soul, if her confidence in you should be
 “ weakened, all would be lost. The good-
 “ ness of her heart is my only resource, and
 “ it is only by an unalterable gentleness that
 “ we can prevent her being exasperated. Af-
 “ ter all, the tryals to which I put her are
 “ grievous at her time of life, and you must
 “ be her support.”

These precautions were useless; whether from vanity, or delicacy, Hortensia had the
 I 4 power.

power to conceal her chagrins from the eyes of her father. "A good sign," said Lufane, "she knows how to subdue herself; and there are none but weak souls of whom we ought to despair." The day following they dined together alone, and in the most profound silence. At their getting up from table Hortensia ordered the horses to be put to. "Where are you going?" said her husband.—"To make an excuse, Sir, for the rudeness I was guilty of yesterday."—"Go, Hortensia, since you will have it so; but if my repose be dear to you, take your last leave of those women."

Artenice and Olympia, to whom Madam de Fierville had related the scene she had had with Lufane, suspected that it was he who had hindered Hortensia from going to the play with them. "Yes," said they to her, "it was he: we saw him but for a minute, but we have formed our opinion of him: he is a morose, absolute man, and one who will make you unhappy."—"He has talked to me hitherto only in the style of friendship. It is true that he has his particular principles, and a way of living but little compatible with the customs of the world, but . . ." "But let him live by himself," replied Olympia, "and let him leave us to amuse ourselves in peace. Do you ask him to follow you? A
 " huf-

“ husband is the man in the world we can best
 “ spare, and I do not see why you have occa-
 “ sion for his advice to receive whomsoever you
 “ think proper, and to go and see whom you
 “ please.” “ No, Madam,” said Hortensia
 to her, “ it is not so easy as you imagine,
 “ to put one’s self, at my age, above the
 “ will of a husband, who has behaved so
 “ well to me.” “ She gives way; see, she
 “ is quite tamed,” replied Artenice. “ Ah,
 “ my dear! you do not know what it is to
 “ yield once to a man, with whom one is to
 “ pass one’s life. Our husbands are our ty-
 “ rants if they are not our slaves. Their au-
 “ thority is a torrent which swells as it runs:
 “ we can stop it only at its source; and I
 “ speak from experience: for having been
 “ guilty of an unfortunate complaisance to my
 “ husband twice, I have been for six months
 “ together obliged to struggle with him for
 “ the ascendancy which my weakness had
 “ given him; and but for an unparallelled ef-
 “ fort of courage it would have been all over
 “ with me, I was a gone woman.” “ That
 “ depends upon tempers,” said Hortensia,
 “ and my husband is not one of those who are
 “ to be brought down by obstinacy.” “ Un-
 “ deceive yourself,” replied Olympia; “ there
 “ is not one whom gentleness ever reconciles;
 “ it is by opposing them that we rule them;

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“ it is by the dread of ridicule and shame that
 “ we hold them: what are you afraid of?
 “ We are very strong when we are handsome,
 “ and have nothing to reproach ourselves.
 “ Your cause is that of all the women;
 “ and the men themselves, the men who
 “ know how to live, will be on your side.”

Hortensia objected the example of her cousin, whom Lusane had made happy. They replied, that her cousin was a weak woman; that if the life which she had led was a good one to her, it was because she knew no better; but that a woman, launched into the great world, who had tasted the charms of it, and formed its ornament, was not made to bury herself in the solitude of her own house, and the narrow circle of an obscure acquaintance. They talked to her of a superb ball which the Duchess of . . . was to give the next day. “ All the handsome
 “ women will be invited there,” said they to her: “ if your husband prevents your going, it is
 “ a stroke that will cry out for vengeance, and
 “ we advise you, as friends, to seize that occasion to make a noise, and to part.”

Though Hortensia was very far from wishing to follow these violent counsels, she still retained a bitterness in her soul, at seeing that her unhappiness was going to be known in the world, and that they would look for her in vain at those feasts where but for this she would

would have seen herself adored. On her return home, a card was put into her hands: she read it with impatience, and sighed after having read it. Her trembling hand still held it, when her husband accosted her. "It is," said she to him carelessly, "a card of invitation to the Duchefs of — ball."—"Well, Madam?"—"Well, Sir, I shall not go: be easy."—"Why then, Hortensia, deprive yourself of decent pleasures? Have I forbidden them you? The honour that is done you, pleases me as much and more than it does yourself: go to the ball, eclipse every thing there that is most lovely; that will be a triumph to me." Hortensia was not able to dissemble her surprise and joy. "Ah! Lufane," said she to him, "why are you not always the same? there now is the husband I promised myself. I recover him now; but is it for a long time?" Lufane's company assembled in the evening, and Hortensia was adorable. They proposed suppers, parties to the play; she engaged herself to them with the best grace. Cheerfull with the men, engaging with the women, she charmed them all. Lufane alone dared not yet deliver himself up to the joy which she inspired; he foresaw that this good-humour would not continue long without clouds. In the mean time he said just one word to his valet-
de-

de-chambre, and the next day when his wife asked for her domino, it was like a surprise in a play. They presented her with a dress for the ball, which the hand of Flora seemed to have varied with the most beautiful colours of the spring; those flowers in which the art of Italy equals nature, and deceives the ravished eyes, those flowers ran in garlands, over the light waves of a silk tissue of the most brilliant freshness. Hortensia, in love with her dress, her husband, and herself, could not conceal her transport. Her glass being consulted, promised her the most striking successes, and that oracle never deceived her: accordingly, on appearing at the assembly, she enjoyed the flattering emotion occasioned by unanimous admiration; and to a young woman this ebb and flow, this murmur, have altogether something so touching! It is easy to judge that at her return Lusane was pretty well treated; it seemed as if she wanted to paint all the transports which she had raised. At first he received her caresses without reflexion, for the wisest sometimes forget themselves; but when he recollected himself, "A ball," said he, "a domino, turns this young head! Ah! what conflicts have I yet to sustain before I see her such as I could wish her!"

Hortensia had seen at the ball all those giddy young people, from whom her husband wanted

to detach her. "He does right," said they to her, "to grow reasonable, and to restore you to your friends: he was going to become the publick jest, and we had made a league to distress him where-ever he appeared; tell him then, for his own ease, to vouchsafe to let us see you. If we have the unhappiness to displease him, we give him leave to put himself under no restraint; but let him be contented with rendering himself invisible, without requiring that his wife should be so." Intimidated by these menaces, Hortensia gave her husband to understand, that they took it ill that his door was shut against them, that people of fashion complained of it, and proposed to remonstrate even to him upon it. "If they do," said he, "I will teach them how to take their revenge on me: let each of them marry a handsome woman, live at home with their friends, and shut their doors in my face every time that I go to trouble them."

Some days after, two of these young fellows, piqued at not having been able to introduce themselves to Hortensia, saw Lusane at the opera, and went up to him, in order to ask him the reason of the rude behaviour of his Swiss. "Sir," said the Chevalier de St. Placide to him, "have they told you that the Marquis de Cirval and myself have
" been

“ been twice at your house ? ” — “ Yes, gentle-
 “ men, I know that you have given yourselves
 “ that trouble. ” — “ Neither yourself nor your
 “ lady were to be seen. ” — “ That is very
 “ often the case. ” — “ Yet you see company. ”
 — “ Only friends. ” — “ We are Hortensia’s
 “ friends, and in Valsain’s time we always
 “ saw her. Ah ! Sir, what an agreeable
 “ man was Valsain ! she has not lost by the
 “ exchange ; but he was the genteellest, the
 “ most complaisant of all husbands. ” — “ I
 “ know it. ” — “ He, for example, was not
 “ jealous. ” — “ Happy man ! ” — “ You speak
 “ as if you envied him ; can it be true, as
 “ they say, that you are not so easy ? ” —
 “ Ah ! gentlemen, if ever you marry, take
 “ care you do not love your wives ; it is a
 “ cruel thing, this jealousy ! ” — “ What, are
 “ you really come to that ? ” — “ Alas ! yes,
 “ for my sins. ” — “ But Hortensia is so vir-
 “ tuous ! ” — “ I know it. ” — “ She lived like
 “ an angel with Valsain. ” — “ I hope she
 “ will live the same with me too. ” — “ Why
 “ then do her the injustice of being jealous ? ”
 — “ It is an involuntary emotion, which I can-
 “ not account for. ” — “ You confess then it
 “ is a folly ? ” — “ To such a degree, that
 “ I cannot see near my wife any man of a
 “ handsome figure, or distinguished merit, but
 “ my head turns ; and this is the reason that
 “ my

“ my gate is shut against the most amiable
 “ people in the world.” “ The Marquis
 “ and I,” said the Chevalier, “ are not dan-
 “ gerous, and we hope”—“ You,
 “ gentlemen, you are among those who would
 “ make me unhappy all my life. I know you
 “ too well not to fear you: and since I must
 “ confess it, I have myself required of my
 “ wife that she should never see you again.”
 —“ But, Mr. President, that is but a sorry
 “ kind of compliment.”—“ Ah! gentlemen,
 “ it is the most agreeable one that a jealous
 “ husband can make you.” “ Chevalier,”
 said the Marquis, when Lufane had quitted
 them, “ we wanted, I thought, to make a
 “ jest of this man.”—“ That was my design.”
 —“ I am afraid; God forgive me, that he makes
 “ a jest of us.”—“ I have some suspicion of
 “ it; but I will take my revenge on him.”
 —“ How?”—“ As men revenge themselves
 “ on a husband.”

The same evening, at supper, at the Mar-
 chioness of Bellune's, they represented Lufane
 as the most odious of men. “ And the little
 “ woman,” said the Marchioness, “ has the
 “ meanness to suffer him to restrain her?
 “ Ah! I will give her a lesson.” Madam de
 Bellune's house was the rendezvous of all the
 giddy people both of city and court, and her
 secret for drawing them together was to as-
 semble

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semble the handsomest women. Hortensia was invited to a ball which she gave. There was a necessity of acquainting Lufane with it before-hand; but without having any appearance of asking his consent, she just dropped a word *en passant*. "No, my dear," said Lufane to Hortensia, "Madam de Bellune's house is in a stile that does not suit you. Her ball is a rendezvous at which you ought not to be. The publick is not obliged to believe you more infallible than another, and in order to prevent all suspicion of miscarriage, the surest way is to avoid the hazard of it." The young woman, so much the more irritated at this refusal, as she did not expect it, burst into complaints and reproaches. "You abuse," said she to him, "the authority which I have confided to you; but beware of driving me to extremities." "I understand you, Madam," replied Lufane to her, in a firmer and graver tone; "but as long as I esteem you, I shall not fear this menace, and I should fear it still less, if I were to cease to esteem you." Hortensia, who had annexed no idea to the words that had just escaped her, blushed at the meaning they seemed to carry with them, and replied only by tears. Lufane seized the moment when resentment yielded to confusion. "I grow odious to you," said he; "yet what
"is

“is my crime?” that of saving your youth
 “from the dangers which surround it, of de-
 “taching you from that which might cast a
 “blemish, I do not say on your innocence,
 “but on your reputation, of wanting to make
 “you love soon what it is necessary that you
 “must love always.”—“Yes, Sir, your in-
 “tentions are good; but you have a bad me-
 “thod of carrying them into execution. You
 “want to make me love my duty, and you
 “make a slavery of it: there may be some
 “ill consequences to be foreseen in my con-
 “nexions; but I must dissolve instead of break-
 “ing them, and detach myself insensibly from
 “the people who displease you, without ma-
 “king you an object of ridicule, by impri-
 “soning me in my own house.”—“When
 “the ridicule is without foundation,” replied
 Lufane, “it recoils on those who give it.
 “The prison of which you complain is the
 “asylum of virtue, and will also be that of
 “peace and happiness whenever you shall
 “think proper to make it so. You upbraid
 “me with not having used a little delicacy
 “towards these people and yourself; I have
 “had my reasons for cutting to the quick.
 “I know that at your time of life the conta-
 “gion of fashion, example, and habitude,
 “make new progress every day; and that
 “without cutting off all communication, there
 “is

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“ is no way of guarding against it. It gives
 “ me inexpressible uneasiness to talk to you
 “ in an absolute tone; but it is my affection
 “ for you that gives me the courage: a
 “ friend ought to know on occasion how to
 “ contradict a friend. Be well assured then,
 “ that as long as I love you, I shall have the
 “ strength to resist you; and woe to you if
 “ I abandon you.”—“ Woe to me! you
 “ esteem me very little if you think me lost
 “ the moment you cease to lead me in a string.
 “ No, Sir, I knew how to conduct myself
 “ long ago, and Valsain, who did me justice,
 “ never had occasion to repent of his confi-
 “ dence. I own to you, that in my husband
 “ I did not intend to create myself a tyrant.
 “ In order to submit to your will, one ought
 “ to have a strength or a weakness which I
 “ have not; all the denials you impose on me
 “ are grievous, and I will never accustom
 “ myself to them.”

Lufane, left alone to himself, reproached him-
 self for the tears he had made her shed. “ What
 “ have I undertaken?” said he, “ and what a
 “ trial to my soul! I her tyrant! I, who love
 “ her more than my life, and whose heart is torn
 “ in pieces with her complaints! If I per-
 “ sist, I drive her to distraction, and if I give
 “ way one single moment, I lose the fruit of
 “ my perseverance. One step into this round-
 “ of

“ of company, which she loves, will engage
 “ her in it a-new. I must support this cruel
 “ character, this character so much more cruel
 “ to myself than to her.”

Hortensia passed the night in the greatest trouble; all violent measures presented themselves to her mind; but the probity of her mind shuddered at them. “ Why discourage
 “ myself?” said she, when her wrath was a little appeased. “ This man commands
 “ himself, and rules me because he does not
 “ love me; but if he should ever come to
 “ love me, I should soon reign in my turn.
 “ Let me use the only arms nature has given
 “ us, gentleness and seduction.”

Lufane, who had not closed his eyes, came to ask her in the morning, with an air of friendship, how she had passed the night. “ You
 “ know how,” said she to him, “ you who
 “ take a pleasure in disturbing my repose.
 “ Ah! Lufane, was it for you to be the cause
 “ of my unhappiness? who could have told
 “ me that I should have repented of a choice
 “ which I made with such a good will, and
 “ such good intentions?” In pronouncing these words, she had stretched out her hand to him, and two eyes, the most eloquent that love ever yet made speak, reproached him for his ingratitude. “ My better half,” said he to her, embracing her, “ believe that I
 “ have

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“ have placed all my glory and happiness
 “ in making you happy. I would have
 “ your life strewed with flowers; but per-
 “ mit me to pluck away the thorns. Wish
 “ for what may never cost you any regret,
 “ and be assured it shall be fulfilled in my
 “ soul, as soon as formed in thine. The law
 “ which I impose upon you is only your own
 “ will; not that of the moment which is a
 “ whim, a caprice; but that which will arise
 “ from reflexion and experience, that which
 “ you will have ten years hence: I enter-
 “ tain for you the tenderness of a lover,
 “ the frankness of a friend, and the un-
 “ easy vigilance of a father; there is my
 “ heart; it is worthy of you, and if you
 “ are still unjust enough to complain of it,
 “ you shall not long have occasion to do so.”

This discourse was accompanied with the most
 touching marks of a passionate love, and Hor-
 tensia appeared sensible of them. Eight days
 passed away in the best understanding, in the
 most intimate union that could reign between
 two married people. To the charms of beau-
 ty, of youth, Hortensia joined the enchantment
 of those timid caresses, which love, in conjunc-
 tion with duty, seems to steal from modesty.
 It is the finest of all toils to emmesh a tender
 heart. But was all this really sincere? Lu-
 sane thought so; I think so too. After all,
 she

A MORAL TALE. 21,

she would not be the first woman who should have made her inclination agree with her views, and her policy with her pleasures.

In the mean time, they approach those days consecrated to folly and joy, during which we are as foolish, but much less joyous than our fathers. Hortensia gave some intimation to Lufane of her desire to give an entertainment, in which musick should precede a supper, which should be followed by a dance. Lufane consented with the best grace in the world, but not without precaution: he agreed with his wife on the choice and number of persons whom she should invite; and according to this arrangement the cards were distributed.

The day arrives, and every thing is prepared with the attention of a magnificent lover; but that very morning the Swiss asks to speak to his master. "Besides those who shall come with cards, it is my lady's pleasure," said he to him, "that I admit all who come to the ball. Is that your intention, Sir?" "To be sure," said Lufane, concealing his surprise, "and you ought not to doubt but I approve what your lady orders." He then went directly to her, and having told her what had just happened, "You have exposed yourself," said he, "to be put to shame before your servants; you have hazarded what a
" woman

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“ woman cannot too much conciliate, the
 “ confidence of your husband. Is it for you,
 “ Hortensia, to make use of surprise towards
 “ me? Were I less persuaded of the probity
 “ of your soul, what an opinion would you
 “ give me of it, and what would have been
 “ the consequence of this imprudence? The
 “ pleasure of afflicting me for a moment, and
 “ of making me more mistrustfull of you than
 “ I would wish to be. Ah! suffer me to
 “ esteem you for ever, and respect yourself as
 “ much as I respect you! I will not humble
 “ you by revoking the order you have given,
 “ but you will give me unspeakable uneasi-
 “ ness if you do not revoke it yourself, and
 “ your conduct this day shall be my rule all
 “ my life.” “ I have committed a fault,”
 said she, “ I see it, and I will repair it. I will
 “ send word that I shall have neither musick,
 “ nor supper, nor ball, to-night; I would
 “ not wear an appearance of joy when I have
 “ a deadly grief in my heart. The publick
 “ shall know that I am unhappy, but I am
 “ weary of dissembling.” Lusane then fall-
 ing at her feet, “ If I loved you less,” said he,
 “ I should yield to your reproaches; but I
 “ adore you, I will subdue myself: I shall die
 “ of grief to be hated by my wife, but I can-
 “ not live in the shame of having betrayed her
 “ by abandoning her. I took a sensible plea-
 “ sure

“ sure in giving you an entertainment; you
 “ refuse it, because I exclude what is not worthy
 “ to approach you; you declare to me from
 “ thence, that a frivolous world is dearer to
 “ you than your husband: it is enough; I
 “ will go and give notice that the entertain-
 “ ment will not take place. Hortensia,
 moved to the bottom of her soul with what she
 had just heard, and more touched still with
 the tears that she had seen trickle from his eyes,
 recollected herself. “ What am I going to
 “ persist in?” said she. “ Are the people
 “ whom he wants me to detach myself from
 “ my friends? Would they sacrifice the slight-
 “ est of their interests to me? and yet for
 “ them I lose the quiet of my life, I trouble
 “ it, I embitter it, I renounce every thing
 “ that can form its happiness. It is spite, it
 “ is vanity, that inspire me. Have I even
 “ chosen to examine whether my husband
 “ was right? I have seen nothing but the
 “ humiliation of obeying. But who shall
 “ command if it be not the wisest? I am a
 “ slave; and who is not so, or who ought
 “ not to be so, to their duties? I call an ho-
 “ nest man a tyrant, who conjures me with
 “ tears in his eyes to take care of my reputa-
 “ tion! Where then is that pride with which
 “ I reproach him? Ah! I should perhaps be
 “ much to be pityed if he were as weak as I.
 “ I

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“ I afflict him in the very moment that he had
 “ shown the most delicate attention to spare
 “ me! These are injuries, these are real
 “ ones, and not those which I attribute to
 “ him.” “ Go,” said she to one of her wo-
 “ men, “ go and tell your master that I would
 “ speak to him.” Scarce had she sent this
 “ message, than a sudden qualm seized her. “ I
 “ am going then,” said she, “ to consent to
 “ mope all my life: for I cannot conceal it
 “ from myself, but that one has amusements
 “ only in the great world; and all those good
 “ folks among whom he wants me to live,
 “ have not the charms of Valsain’s friends.”

As this reflexion had a little changed the dis-
 position of her soul, she contented herself with
 telling Lusane, that she would willingly give
 way to him for this once. She excused her-
 self to the people who had asked to be admitted
 to her ball; and the entertainment, which
 was as brilliant as possible, had all the viva-
 city of joy, without tumult and confusion.

“ Tell me then, my dear, if any thing has
 “ been wanting to our amusement?” said Lu-
 sane to Hortensia. “ You disguise some-
 “ times,” said she to him, “ the constraint
 “ you put upon me; but entertainments do
 “ not come every day. It is in the void and
 “ silence of her house that a woman of my
 “ age draws in the poison of dullness; and if
 “ you

“ you would see that slow poison consume my
 “ youth, you will have all the pleasure of it.”
 “ No, Madam,” said he to her, penetrated
 with grief; “ I have not that deliberate cru-
 “ elty of which you suspect me. If I must
 “ renounce the care of making you happy,
 “ that dear, that pleasing care, which ought
 “ to take up my whole life, at least I will not
 “ have to reproach myself with having poi-
 “ soned the happiness of your days. Neither
 “ I, nor the virtuous friends I have chosen
 “ for you, have sufficient to make you amends
 “ for the denials I occasion you; without
 “ that crowd which surrounded you, my house
 “ seems a dreadful solitude to you; you
 “ have the cruelty to tell me so yourself: I
 “ must restore you then to that liberty with-
 “ out which you like nothing. I ask of you
 “ but one more act of complaisance: to-
 “ morrow I shall bring you a new set of com-
 “ pany; and if you do not judge them worthy
 “ to employ your leisure, if they do not take
 “ place of this world, which is so dear to you,
 “ all is over, and I give you up to yourself.”

Hortensia had not much difficulty in granting
 him what he asked: she was very sure that he
 had nothing to present her which was equiva-
 lent to her liberty; but it was not purchasing
 it too dear to submit to this slight trial.

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The next day, on her waking, she saw her husband enter with a shining countenance, in which sparkled love and joy. "Here," said he, "is the new company which I propose to you; if you are not satisfied with this, I no longer know how to amuse you." Imagine the surprise of this sensible mother on seeing before her the two children whom she had by Valsain. "Children," said Lufane, taking them in his arms in order to lift them to Hortensia's bed, "embrace your mother, and prevail on her tenderness to vouchsafe to share the cares which I shall take to bring you up." Hortensia pressed them to her bosom, and bathed them with her tears. "Till Nature," continued Lufane, "grant me the title of father, love and friendship give it me, and I am going to fulfill its duties." "Come, my love," said Hortensia, "this is to me the dearest and tenderest of all your lessons. I had forgot that I was a mother, I was going to forget that I was a wife. You recall me to those duties; and those two bands united bind me for all my life."

THE



THE CONNOISSEUR.

CELICOUR, from the age of fifteen, had been in the country what is called a little prodigy. He made the most gallant verses in the world. There was not one handsome woman in the neighbourhood whom he had not celebrated, and who had not discovered that his eyes had still more spirit than his verses. It was pity to suffer such great talents to lie buried in a little country-town: Paris ought to be their theatre, and he managed so well that his father resolved to send him there. This father was an honest man, who loved wit without having any himself, and who admired, without knowing why, every thing that came from the capital; he had even some literary relations there, and in the number of his correspondents was a *Connoisseur*, called M. de Fintac. It was particularly to him that Celicour was recommended.

Fintac received the son of his friend with the kindness of one who takes persons under his protection. "Sir," said he, "I have heard of you: I know that you have

“ had success in the country; but in the
 “ country, believe me, arts and letters
 “ are yet in their infancy. Without taste,
 “ wit and genius produce nothing but what is
 “ deformed, and there is no taste but at
 “ Paris. Begin then by persuading yourself
 “ that you are but just born, and by forget-
 “ ting all that you have learnt.” “ What
 “ would I not forget?” said Celicour, cast-
 ing his eyes on a niece of eighteen, whom the
 Connoisseur had with him. “ Yes, Sir, it
 “ is to-day that I begin to live. I know not
 “ what charm breathes in these places: but it
 “ unfolds in me faculties unknown to me
 “ before: I seem to myself to have acquired
 “ new senses, a new soul.” “ Good!” cried
 Fintac, “ there now is enthusiasm: he is born
 “ a poet, and from this single stroke I war-
 “ rant him one.” “ There is no poetry in
 “ that,” replied Celicour; “ it is plain and
 “ simple nature.”—“ So much the better!
 “ there is the true talent. And at what age
 “ did you feel yourself animated with this di-
 “ vine fire?”—“ Alas, Sir, I have had some
 “ sparks of it in the country, but I never ex-
 “ perience there this lively and sudden heat
 “ which penetrates me at this instant.” “ It is
 “ the air of Paris,” said Fintac. “ It is the
 “ air of your house,” said Celicour: “ I am
 “ in the temple of the Muses.” The Con-
 noisseur

noisseur found that this young man had happy dispositions.

Agathe, the most beautifull little wag that Love ever formed, lost not one word of this conversation; and certain sly looks, a certain smile which played on her lips, gave Celicour to understand, that she did not mistake the double meaning of his replies. "I am greatly pleased with your father," added the Connoisseur, "for having sent you hither at an age when the mind is docile enough to receive right impressions; but guard yourself against bad. You will find at Paris more false connoisseurs than good judges. Do not go and consult every body, but stick close to the instruction of a man who has never been mistaken in any thing." Celicour, who did not imagine that one might praise one's self with so much openness, had the simplicity to ask who that infallible man was? "It is I, Sir," replied Fintac with a tone of confidence, "I, who have passed my life with all the artists and *litterati* of greatest consideration; I, who for these forty years have exercised myself in distinguishing, in things both of fancy and of taste, the real and permanent beauties, the beauties of mode and of convention. I say it, because it is well known, and there is no vanity in agreeing to a known fact."

Extraordinary as this language was, Celicour hardly paid any attention to it, which was engaged by an object more interesting. Agathe had sometimes deigned to lift up her eyes upon him, and those eyes seemed to tell him the most obliging things in the world; but was it their natural vivacity, or the pleasure of seeing their triumph, that animated them? That was a point to be cleared up. Celicour therefore begged the Connoisseur to allow him the honour of visiting him often, and Finlac himself pressed him to it.

On his second visit, the young man was obliged to wait till the Connoisseur was visible, and to pass a quarter of an hour *tête-à-tête* with the lovely niece. She made him many excuses, and he replied that there was no occasion for them. “Sir,” said Agathe to him, “my uncle is charmed with you.”—“That is a very pleasing piece of success to me; but, Madam, there is one which would touch me still more.”—“My uncle says you are formed to succeed in every thing.”—“Ah! why do not you think the same!”—“I am pretty often of my uncle’s opinion.”—“Assist me then to merit his kindness.”—“You seem to me to want no assistance.”—“Pardon me; I know that great men have almost all of them their singularities, sometimes even weaknesses. To flatter their
“tastes,

“ tastes, their opinions, their temper, one
 “ must know them; to know them one must
 “ study them; and, if you please, beautifull
 “ Agathe, you can abridge that study for me.
 “ After all, what is the point? To gain the
 “ good-will of your unkle? Nothing in the
 “ world is more innocent.”—“ It is the cus-
 “ tom then in the country to come to an un-
 “ derstanding with the nieces, in order to
 “ succeed with the unkles? That is very dex-
 “ terous, indeed.”—“ Nothing in it but what
 “ is very natural.”—“ But if my unkle had, as
 “ you say, singularities and foibles, must I tell
 “ you of them?”—“ Why not? Would you
 “ suspect me of wanting to make an ill use of
 “ them?”—“ No; but his niece!” —
 “ Very well, his niece ought to wish that one
 “ should endeavour to please him. He is past
 “ the time of life in which we correct ourselves;
 “ nothing remains then but to manage him.”
 —“ An admirable remover of scruples.”—
 “ Ah! you would not have any if you knew
 “ me better; but no, you have dissembled.”—
 “ Truly, I see the gentleman for the second
 “ time; how can I have any secrets from
 “ him?” — “ I am indiscreet, I confess,
 “ and I ask you pardon.” — “ No, it is I
 “ who have been wrong, to let you fancy
 “ the thing more serious than it is. The
 “ fact is this: my unkle is a good man, and

“ would never have pretended to any thing
 “ more, if they had not put it into his head
 “ to know every thing, to judge of arts and
 “ letters, to be the guide, estimator, and
 “ arbiter of talents. That hurts nobody;
 “ but it draws a crowd of blockheads to
 “ our house, whom my unkle protects,
 “ and with whom he shares the ridicule
 “ of being a wit. It were much to be wish-
 “ ed for his own ease that he would aban-
 “ don this chimera; for the publick seem to
 “ have made it their business never to be of
 “ his opinion, and we have every day some
 “ new scene.”—“ You afflict me.”—“ You
 “ are now in possession of all the secrets of the
 “ family, and we have nothing more to con-
 “ ceal from you.” Just as she finished, word
 was brought to Celicour that the Connoisseur
 was visible.

The study into which he was introduced
 announced the multiplicity of his studies and
 the variety of his knowledge: the floor was
 covered with folios piled up on one another in
 the utmost confusion, rolls of prints, maps
 lying open, and manuscripts jumbled toge-
 ther; on a table, a Tacitus open near a se-
 pulchral lamp surrounded by antique medals;
 farther off, a telescope on its carriage, the
 sketch of a picture on the easel, a model of
 bas-relief in wax, scraps of natural history;
 and

and in the fret-work of the ceiling, representations of books picturesquely overturned. The young man knew not where to set his foot, and his embarrassment gave the Connoisseur infinite pleasure. "Forgive," said he to him, "the confusion in which you find me: this is my study, I have occasion for all these things at hand: but do not imagine that the same disorder reigns in my head: every thing there is in its place; the variety, nay the number itself, causes no confusion there." "Wonderfull!" said Celicour, who knew not what he said, for his thoughts were still on Agathe. "O, very wonderfull!" replied Fintac; "and I am often surprised myself when I reflect on the mechanism of the memory, and the manner in which the ideas class and arrange themselves as fast as they arise: it seems as if there were drawers for every different kind of knowledge. For example, across that multitude of things which had passed through my imagination, who will explain to me how I came to retrace in my memory, to a given point, what I had read formerly on the return of the comet? for you are to know that it was I who gave the watch-word to our astronomers."—"You, Sir?"—"They never thought of it, and, but for me, the comet had passed *incognito* over our

K 5

"horizon.

“ horizon. I have not boasted of it, as you
 “ may plainly see: I tell it you in confi-
 “ dence.”—“ And why suffer yourself to be
 “ deprived of the glory of so important a piece
 “ of intelligence?”—“ Good! I should ne-
 “ ver have done if I were to lay claim to all
 “ that they steal from me. In general, my lad,
 “ take it for granted, that a solution, a dis-
 “ covery, a piece of poetry, of painting, or of
 “ eloquence, belong not, so much as is ima-
 “ gined, to the person who takes the credit
 “ of it to himself. But what is the object of
 “ a connoisseur? To encourage talents, at
 “ the same time that he enlightens them.
 “ Whether the thought of this bas-relief, the
 “ disposition of this picture, the beauties of
 “ the parts, or the whole of this play, be the
 “ artist’s or mine, is matter of indifference
 “ to the progress of the art; now that is all
 “ my concern. They come, I tell them my
 “ thought; they listen to me, they make
 “ their advantage of it. ’Tis excellent: I
 “ am recompensed when they have succeeded.”
 “ Nothing finer,” said Celicour: “ the arts
 “ ought to regard you as their Apollo. And
 “ does Mademoiselle Agathe condescend to
 “ be also their muse?”—“ No, my niece is a
 “ madcap, whom I wanted to bring up with
 “ care; but she has no taste for study. I had
 “ engaged her to cast her eye over history;
 “ she

“ she returned me my books, saying that it
 “ was not worth while to read, for the sake
 “ of seeing in all ages illustrious madmen and
 “ rogues sporting with a crowd of fools. I
 “ wanted to try if she had a greater taste for
 “ eloquence; she pretended that Cicero, De-
 “ mosthenes, &c. were only dexterous jugglers;
 “ and when one had good reasons, there was
 “ no need of so many words. For morality,
 “ she maintains that she knows it all by heart,
 “ and that Lucas, her foster-father, is as
 “ wise as Socrates. There is nothing there-
 “ fore but poetry that amuses her sometimes;
 “ and then she prefers fables to the more sub-
 “ lime poems, and tells you plainly that she
 “ had rather hear Fontaine’s animals speak,
 “ than the heroes of Virgil and Homer. In
 “ a word, she is at eighteen as much a child
 “ as at twelve; and in the midst of the most
 “ serious, the most interesting conversations,
 “ you would be surpris’d to see her amusing
 “ herself with a trifle, or growing dull the
 “ moment one would captivate her attention.”
 Celicour, laughing within himself, took leave
 of M. de Fintac, who did him the favour to
 invite him to dine with him the next day.

The young man was so transported, that he
 slept not that night. To dine with Agathe!
 it was the happiest day of his life. He arrives,
 and by his beauty, by his youth, by the air of
 serenity

serenity diffused over his countenance, one might have imagined we saw Apollo, if Fintac's Parnassus had been better composed; but as he wanted none but dependents and flatterers, he drew to his house only such persons as were fit to be so.

He introduced Celicour to them as a young poet of the greatest expectation, and made him take his place at table at his right hand. From that moment behold all the eyes of envy fixed upon him. Each of the guests thought he saw his own place usurped, and swore in the bottom of their souls to take their revenge on him by decrying the first work he should publish. In the mean time Celicour was graciously received, caressed by all these gentlemen, and took them from that instant for the most honest people in the world. A new comer excited emulation: Wit hoisted all her sails: they judged the republick of letters; and as it is just to mingle commendation with criticism, they praised generously all the dead, and tore in pieces the living, the present company always excepted. All the new works, which had succeeded without passing under the inspection of Fintac, could but have their day, and that a short one; all those to which he had given the seal of his approbation, were to attain to immortality, whatever the present age thought of them. They ran through all
kinds

kinds of literature; and in order to give more scope to erudition and criticism, they brought on the carpet this entirely new question, *viz.* "Which merited the preference, Corneille or "Racine?" They said also on the subject the finest things in the world, when the little niece, who had not spoke a word, took it into her head to ask simply which of the two fruits, the orange or the peach, had the most exquisite taste, and merited the most commendation? Her uncle blushed at her simplicity, and the guests all looked down without deigning to reply to this idle foolery. "Niece," said Fintac, "at your age one should hear and "hold one's tongue." Agathe, with an imperceptible half-smile, looked at Celicour, who had understood her perfectly well, and whose glance consoled her for the contempt of the company. I forgot to mention that he was placed opposite to her, and you may easily imagine that he listened very little to what was said around him. But the Connoisseur, who examined his countenance, perceived in it a very extraordinary fire. "See," said he to his geniusses, "see how talent pierces." "Yes," replied one of them, "we see it "transpire like water through the pores of "an eolipile." Fintac, taking Celicour by the hand, said to him, "There is a comparison now! Poetry and philosophy blended "together!

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“ together! It is thus that the talents border on each other, and that the Muses join hands. Confess,” continued he, “ that such dinners are not found in your country-towns; and you see nothing: there are days, when these gentlemen have even a hundred times more wit.” “ It would be hard not to have it,” said one of them: “ we are at the fountain-head, *et purpurea bimus ore nectar.*” “ Ah! *purpureo!*” replied Fintac modestly; “ you do me a great deal of honour.”—“ Hark, young man, learn to quote.” The young man was all the while very attentive to catch Agathe’s looks, who on her side thought him very handsome.

On rising from table, they went to walk in the garden, where the Connoisseur had taken care to get together the rare plants from all quarters. He had, among other wonders, a parti-coloured cabbage, which drew the admiration of naturalists. Its folds, its festoon, the mixture of its colours, was the most astonishing thing in the world. “ Let them show,” said Fintac, “ a foreign plant which Nature has taken the trouble to form with more labour and delicacy. It is for the sake of avenging Europe on the prejudice of certain *virtuosi* in favour of every thing that comes

“ comes from the Indies and the new world,
 “ that I have preserved this fine cabbage.”

While they were admiring this prodigy, Agathe and Celicour had joined each other, as it were, without intending it, in a neighbouring walk. “ Beautifull Agathe,” said the young man, showing her a rose, “ would
 “ you let this flower die on the stalk?”—
 “ Where then would you have it die?”—
 “ Where I would die myself.” Agathe blushed at this answer; and in that instant her uncle, with two wits, came and seated themselves in an adjacent arbour, from whence, without being perceived, he could overhear them. “ If it is true,” continued Celicour,
 “ that souls pass from one body into another,
 “ I wish after my death to be such a rose as
 “ that. If any profane hand advances to
 “ gather me, I will conceal myself amid the
 “ prickles; but if some charming nymph
 “ deigns to cast her eyes on me, I will lean
 “ towards her, expand my bosom, exhale
 “ my perfumes, mingle them with her breath;
 “ and the desire of pleasing her shall animate
 “ my colours.”—“ Very well, you will do so
 “ much that you will be plucked off your stalk,
 “ and the moment after you will be no
 “ more.”—“ Ah, Madam, do you consider as
 “ nothing the happiness of being one moment
 “” His eyes finished saying what his
 mouth

mouth had begun. "And I," said Agathe, disguising her confusion, "if I had my choice, would wish to be changed into a dove, which is gentleness and innocence itself."

"Add to these tenderness and fidelity: yes, beautiful Agathe, the choice is worthy of you. The dove is the bird of Venus; Venus would distinguish you among your fellows; you would be the ornament of her car; Love would repose himself on your wings, or rather he would cherish you in his bosom. It would be from his divine mouth that your bill would take ambrosia."

Agathe interrupted him, saying, that he carried his fictions too far. "One word more," said Celicour: "a dove has a mate; if it depended on you to choose your's, what kind of a soul would you give him?" "That of a she-friend," replied she. At these words Celicour looked on her with two eyes, in which were painted love, reproach, and grief.

"Very well!" said the uncle, getting up, "very well! there now is fine and good poetry for you. The image of this rose is of a freshness worthy Van-huysum, that of the dove is a little picture of Boucher, the freshest, the most gallant in the world, *ut pictura poesis*. Courage, my lad, courage! the allegory is extremely well supported; we shall make something of you. Agathe,

"I

“ I have been pretty well pleased with your
 “ dialogue, and here is M. de Lexergue, who
 “ is as much surpris’d at it as I.” “ It is
 “ certain,” said M. de Lexergue, “ that there
 “ is in Miss’s language something Anacreon-
 “ tick: it is the impression of her unkle’s
 “ taste; he says nothing which is not stamped
 “ with the mark of sound antiquity.” M.
 Lucide found in Celicour’s fictions the *molle*
atque facetum. “ We must conclude this little
 “ scene,” said Fintae; “ we must put it into
 “ verse, it will be one of the prettiest things
 “ we have ever seen.” Celicour said, that in
 order to complete it, he stood in need of A-
 gathe’s assistance; and, that the dialogue
 might have more ease and freedom in it, they
 thought it right to leave them alone. “ To the
 “ dove, your mate, *the soul of a she-friend!*”
 resumed Celicour: “ Ah beautifull Agathe,
 “ is your heart made only for friendship? Is
 “ it for that love has delighted to assemble in
 “ you so many charms?” “ There now,”
 said Agathe smiling, “ is the dialogue ex-
 “ cellently renewed. I have but to take
 “ the reply: there is matter enough to carry
 “ us a great way.” “ If you please,” said
 Celicour, “ it is easy to abridge it.” “ Let
 “ us talk of something else,” interrupted she.
 “ Did the dinner amuse you?”—“ I heard
 “ there but one single word full of sense and
 “ refinement,

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“ refinement, which they had the folly to take
 “ for a simple question; all the rest escaped
 “ me. My soul was not at my ear.”—
 “ It was very happy !”—“ Ah ! very happy !
 “ for it was in my eyes.”—“ If I pleased, I
 “ might pretend not to hear, or not to under-
 “ stand you; but I never put on disguise. I
 “ think it very natural then, under favour of
 “ our wits, for you to take more pleasure in
 “ looking at me than in listening to them;
 “ and I confess to you, in my turn, that
 “ I am not sorry at having one to speak to me,
 “ though it were only by his eyes, in order
 “ to save me from the spleen that they give
 “ me. Now then we are come to a right
 “ understanding, and we shall amuse our-
 “ selves, for we have originals, entertaining
 “ enough in their kind. For example, this
 “ M. Lucide thinks he always sees in things
 “ what nobody else has perceived in them.
 “ He seems as if Nature had told her secret
 “ in his ear; but every body is not worthy
 “ to know what he thinks. He chooses in a
 “ circle a privileged confident. This is com-
 “ monly the most distinguished person; he
 “ leans mysteriously towards that person, and
 “ whispers his opinion. As for M. de Lex-
 “ ergue, he is a scholar of the first class: full
 “ of contempt for every thing modern, he
 “ esteems things by the number of ages. He
 “ would

“ would chuse even that a young woman
 “ should have the air of antiquity, and he
 “ honours me with his attention, because he
 “ thinks I have the profile of the Empress
 “ Popæa. In the groupe which you see be-
 “ low there, is an upright starch man, who
 “ makes pretty little nothings; but does
 “ not know what he means by them. He
 “ demands a day for reading; he names his
 “ auditory himself; he requires that the gate
 “ should be shut against every profane per-
 “ son; he arrives on his tip-toes, places
 “ himself before a table between two flam-
 “ beaus; draws mysteriously out of his poc-
 “ ket a rose-coloured porte-folio; throws
 “ around him a gracious look, which demands
 “ silence; announces a little romance of his
 “ own making, which has had the good fortune
 “ to please some persons of consideration;
 “ reads it deliberately, in order to be the
 “ better tasted, and goes quite to the end,
 “ without perceiving that every body yawns
 “ at him. That little fidgeting man near
 “ him, so full of gesticulation, excites a pity
 “ in me which I am not able to express. Wit
 “ is to him like those sneezings which are
 “ going to come, but never do come. We see
 “ him dying with the desire of saying fine
 “ things; he has them at his tongue’s end;

“ but

“ but they seem to escape him the moment he
 “ is going to catch them. Ah! he is a man
 “ much to be pityed! That dry and tall man,
 “ who walks alone, apart from them, is the
 “ most thoughtfull and most empty person I
 “ know: because he has a bob-wig, and
 “ the vapours, he thinks himself an English
 “ philosopher: he grows heavy on the wing
 “ of a fly, and is so obscure in his ideas,
 “ that one is sometimes tempted to think him
 “ profound.”

While Agathe's wit was exercising itself
 on these characters, Celicour had his eyes
 fixed on her's. “ Ah!” said he, “ that your
 “ uncle, who knows so many things, should
 “ know so little of his niece's understanding!
 “ he represents you as a child!” — “ Oh to
 “ be sure, and these gentlemen all consider
 “ me as such. Accordingly they put no
 “ restraint upon themselves, and the absur-
 “ dity of wit is with me quite at its ease.
 “ Do not go and betray me now.” — “ Never
 “ fear; but we must, Beautifull Agathe,
 “ cement our understanding by stricter ties
 “ than those of friendship.” “ You do in-
 “ justice to friendship,” replied Agathe;
 “ there is something sweeter perhaps; but
 “ there is nothing more solid.”

At these words they came to interrupt them,
 and the Connoisseur walking along with Celi-
 cour,

cour, asked him if the dialogue with his niece had been cleverly resumed. "It is not precisely what I wanted," said the young man, "but I will endeavour to supply it." "I am sorry," says Fintac, "that we interrupted you. Nothing is so difficult as to recover the natural thread, when once we let it escape. This giddy girl has not caught your idea. She has sometimes lights; but all on a sudden they vanish. I hope, at least, that marriage will form her." "You think then of marrying her?" demanded Celicour, with a faltering voice. "Yes," replied Fintac, and I depend upon you for the worthy celebration of that festival. You have seen M. de Lexergue; he is a man of great sense and profound erudition. It is to him that I give my niece." If Fintac had observed Celicour's countenance, he would have seen it grow pale at this news. "A man so serious, and so full of application, as M. de Lexergue, has need," continued he, "of something to dissipate him. He is rich; he has taken a liking to this girl; and in a week's time he is to marry her; but he exacts the greatest secrecy, and my niece herself knows nothing of it yet. As for you, it is highly necessary that you should be initiated into the mystery of an union which you are to celebrate. *O Hymen! ô Hymenæe!*

"you

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“ you understand me. It is an epithalamium
 “ that I ask of you, and here now is an
 “ opportunity to signalise yourself.”—“ Ah!
 “ Sir!...”—“ No modesty: it smothers
 “ all talents.”—“ Excuse me.”—“ You
 “ shall execute it: it is a piece in your own
 “ way, and which will do you a great
 “ deal of honour. My niece is young and
 “ handsome, and with an imagination and
 “ soul, one is not exhausted on such a sub-
 “ ject. With respect to the husband, I have
 “ already told you, he is an extraordinary
 “ man. Nobody so knowing in antiques.
 “ He has a cabinet of medals which he values
 “ at forty thousand crowns. He was even
 “ going to see the ruins of Herculaneum, and
 “ was very near making a voyage to Palmyra.
 “ You see how many images all this presents
 “ to poetry. But you are ruminating upon it
 “ already; yes, I see on your countenance
 “ that profound meditation which hatches the
 “ buds of genius, and disposes them to fruit-
 “ fullness. Go then, go and profit of such
 “ precious moments. I am going also to bury
 “ myself in study.”

Seised with consternation at what he had
 just heard, Celicour burned with impatience
 to see Agathe again. The next day he made
 a pretence to go and consult the Connoisseur;
 and

and before he went into his study, he asked if she was to be seen. "Ah! Mademoiselle," said he to her, "you see a man driven to despair."—"What ails you?"—"I am undone; you are to marry M. de Lexergue."—"Who has told you that story?"—"Who? M. de Fintac himself."—"Seriously?"—"He has charged me to write your epithalamium."—"Very well, will it be a pretty one?"—"You laugh! you think it charming to have M. de Lexergue for a husband!"—"Oh! very charming!"—"Ah! at least, cruel maid, in pity to me who adore you, and who am to lose you!....." Agathe interrupted him as he fell on his knees. "Confess," said she to him, "that these moments of distraction are convenient for a declaration: as the person that makes it is not himself, so she who hears him dares not complain, and, by favour of this disorder, love thinks it may risque every thing. But softly, moderate yourself, and let us see what distracts you."—"Your tranquillity, cruel as you are."—"You would have me afflict myself then at a misfortune which I am not afraid of?"—"I tell you, that it is determined that you shall marry M. de Lexergue."—"How would you have them determine, without me, on that which, with-

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“out me, cannot be put in execution?”—

“But if your uncle has given his word?”—

“If he has given it, he shall retract it.”

—“How, would you have the courage!”

—“The courage of not saying *yes!* a fine

“effort of resolution!”—“Ah! I am at

“the summit of joy!”—“And your joy is

“a folly as well as your grief.”—“You

“will not be M. de Lexergue’s!”—“Very

“well, what then?”—“You will be mine.”

—“Oh! to be sure, there is no medium,

“and every woman who will not be his wife

“will be yours; that is clear. Indeed you

“argue like a country poet. Go, go see my

“uncle, and take care that he has no sus-

“picion of the information that you have

“given me.”

“Well, is the epithalamium in forward-

“ness?” said the Connoisseur to him, as soon

as he came into his presence.—“I have the

“plan in my head.”—“Let us see?”—“I

“have taken the allegory of Time espousing

“Truth.”—“The thought is beautifull; but

“it is gloomy; and besides Time is very old.”

—“M. de Lexergue is an antiquary.”—

“True; but we don’t love to be told that

“we are as old as Time.”—“Would you like

“the nuptials of Venus and Vulcan better?”—

“Vulcan? on account of bronzes and medals.

“No: the adventure of Mars is too disagree-

“able. You will find out, on considera-
 “tion, some thought still more happy.—
 “But *à-propos* of Vulcan, will you come
 “this evening with us to see the essay of
 “an artificer whom I protect? It is some
 “Chinese rockets, of which I have given him
 “the composition; I have even added some-
 “thing to it; for I must always put in some-
 “thing of my own.” Celicour doubted not
 but Agathe would be of the party, and re-
 paired thither with eagerness.

The spectators were seated; Fintac and his
 niece took up one window, and there re-
 mained on Agathe’s side a small space, which
 she had contrived to leave vacant. Celi-
 cour stole timorously into it, and leaped with
 joy on seeing himself so near Agathe. The
 uncle’s eyes were attentive to follow the flight
 of the rockets; Celicour’s were fixed upon the
 niece. The stars might have fallen from the
 heavens, and not have disturbed him. His
 hand met on the side of the window a hand
 softer than the down of flowers; a trembling
 seized him which Agathe must have perceived.
 The hand he touched scarce made a motion to
 withdraw itself; his made one to retain it;
 Agathe’s eyes turned upon him, and met his,
 which asked for pardon. She perceived that
 she should afflict him by withdrawing that
 dear hand; and whether through weakness

or pity, she thought proper to leave it immovable. This was a great deal, but not quite enough: Agathe's hand was shut, and Celicour's could not clasp it. Love inspired him with the courage to open it. Gods! what was his surprise and joy, when he found her yield insensibly to this soft violence! He holds Agathe's hand open in his, he presses it amorously; conceive his felicity! It is not yet perfect: the hand he presses replies not to his; he draws it towards him, inclines towards her, and dares to rest it on his heart, which advances to meet it. It wants to get from him, he stops it, he holds it captive; and love knows with what rapidity his heart beats under this timid hand. This was as a loadstone to her. O triumph! O rapture! It is no longer Celicour that presses it; it is the hand itself that answers the beatings of Celicour's heart. Those who have never loved have never known this emotion, and even those who have loved have never tasted it but once. Their looks were mingled with that touching languor, which is the sweetest of all declarations, when the branch of the fireworks displayed itself in the air. Then Agathe's hand made a new effort to impress itself on the heart of Celicour; and while around them they applauded the glittering beauty of the rockets, our lovers, taken up with themselves, expressed by burning sighs the

the regret of separation. Such was this dumb scene, worthy to be cited among the examples of eloquent silence.

From this moment their hearts understanding each other, there was no longer any secret between them: both tasted for the first time the pleasure of loving, and this blossom of sensibility is the purest essence of the soul. But love, which takes the complexion of characters, was timid and serious in Celicour; lively, joyous, and waggish, in Agathe.

However, the day appointed for informing her of her marriage with M. de Lexergue arrives. The antiquary comes to see her, finds her alone, and makes her a declaration of his love, founded on the consent of her uncle. “I know,” said she raillyng, “that you love me in profile; but for me, I should like a husband that I could love in front, and to speak frankly, you are not the thing for me. You have, you say, my uncle’s consent, but you shall not marry me without my own, and I believe I may assure you that you will not have it as long as I live.” In vain did Lexergue protest to her that she united in her eyes more charms than the Venus de Medicis; Agathe wished him antique Venuses, and assured him that she was not one. “You have your choice,” said she to him, “to expose me to displease my uncle, or to spare me

“ that chagrin. You will afflict me in charging me with the rupture, you will oblige me by taking it upon yourself; and the best thing we can do when we are not loved, is to endeavour not to be hated. And so your very humble servant.”

The antiquary was mortally offended at Agathe's refusal; but out of pride he would have concealed it, if the reproach cast upon him of failing in his word had not extorted the confession from him. Fintac, whose authority and consideration were now brought into question, was enraged at the opposition of his niece, and did all that was possible to conquer it; but he never could draw from her any other answer but that she was no medal, and he concluded by telling her in his passion, that she should never have any other husband. This was not the only obstacle to the happiness of our lovers. Celicour could hope for only part of a small inheritance; and Agathe was entirely dependent on her uncle, who was now less than ever disposed to strip himself of his wealth for her. In happier times he might have taken upon him their little family affairs; but after this refusal of Agathe's, it required a little miracle to engage him to it, and it was Love himself that wrought it.

“ Flatter my uncle,” said Agathe to Celicour; “ intoxicate him with encomiums, and
“ care-

“carefully conceal from him our love.
 “For that purpose let us diligently avoid
 “being found together, and content your-
 “self with informing me of your conduct, *en*
 “*passant*.” Fintac dissembled not to Celicour
 his resentment against his niece. “Can she
 “have,” said he, “any secret inclination?
 “If I knew it But no, she is a little
 “fool, who loves nothing, and feels nothing.
 “Ah! if she reckons upon my inheritance,
 “she is mistaken: I know better how to dis-
 “pose of my favours.” The young man, ter-
 rified at the menaces of the uncle, took the
 first opportunity to inform the niece of it. She
 only rallied on the occasion.—“He is raving
 “mad against you, my dear Agathe.”—
 “That is quite indifferent to me.”—“He
 “says he will disinherit you.”—“Say as he
 “says, gain his confidence, and leave the rest
 “to love and time.” Celicour followed Aga-
 the’s advice, and at every commendation that
 he bestowed on Fintac, Fintac thought he dis-
 covered in him a new degree of merit. “The
 “justness of understanding, the penetration
 “of this young man is without example at his
 “age,” said he to his friends. At last the
 confidence he placed in him was such, that he
 thought he could trust to him what he called
 the secret of his life: this was a dramattick
 piece which he had composed, and which he

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had not had the resolution to read to any one, for fear of risking his reputation. After demanding an inviolable secrecy, he appointed the time for reading it. At this news Agathe was transported with joy. "That is well," said she: "courage; redouble the dose of incense; good or bad, in your eyes this piece has no equal."

Fintac, *tête-à-tête* with the young man, after double-locking his study-door, drew out of a casket this precious manuscript, and read with enthusiasm the coldest, the most insipid comedy that ever was written. It cost the young man a deal of mortification to applaud such flat stuff; but Agathe had recommended it to him. He applauded it therefore, and the Connoisseur was transported. "Confess," said he to him, after reading it, "confess that this is fine."—"Oh, very fine."—"Very well, it is time to tell you then, why I have chosen you for my only confidant. I have burnt with desire this great while to see this piece on the stage, but I would not have it go under my name. (Celicour trembled at these words) "I was unwilling to trust any body; but in short I think you worthy of this mark of my friendship: you shall present my work as your own; I will have nothing but the pleasure of the success, and I leave the glory of it to you." The thought of imposing upon the publick

publick would alone have terrified the young man, but that of seeing appear, and being damned under his name, so contemptible a work, shocked him still more. Confounded at the proposal, he withstood it a long time, but his opposition was to no purpose. “ My secret being confided,” said Fintac, “ engages you in honour to grant me what I ask. It is indifferent to the publick whether the piece be your’s or mine, and this friendly imposition can hurt no body. My piece is my treasure, I make you a present of it: the very remotest posterity will know nothing of it. Here then your delicacy is spared every way: if, after this, you refuse to present this work as your own, I shall think that you do not like it, that you only deceive me in praising it, and that you are equally unworthy of my friendship and esteem.” What would not Agathe’s lover resolve upon rather than incur the hatred of her uncle? He assured him that he was only restrained by laudable motives, and asked twenty-four hours to determine. “ He has read it to me,” said he to Agathe.— “ Well?”—“ Well, it is execrable.”—“ I thought so.”—“ He wants me to bring it on the stage in my name.”—“ What?”—“ To have it pass for mine.”—“ Ah, Celi-
 cour, heaven be praised! Have you ac-

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“ cepted it?”—“ Not yet, but I shall be
 “ forced to it.”—“ So much the better!”—
 “ I tell you, it is detestable.”—“ So much
 “ the better.”—“ It will be damned.”—
 “ So much the better, I tell you; we must
 “ submit to every thing.” Celicour did not
 sleep that night for vexation; and the next
 day Celicour went to the uncle, and told
 him, that there was nothing which he would
 not sooner resolve upon than to displease him.
 “ I would not expose you rashly,” said the
 Connoisseur; “ copy out the piece with
 “ your own hand, you shall read it to our
 “ friends, who are excellent judges, and if
 “ they do not think the success infallible, you
 “ shall not be bound to any thing. I re-
 “ quire only one thing of you; and that is
 “ to study it, in order to read it well.” This
 precaution gave the young man some hope.
 “ I am,” said he to Agathe, “ to read the
 “ piece to his friends; if they think it bad, he
 “ excuses me from bringing it out.”—“ They
 “ will think it good, and so much the better:
 “ we should be undone if they were to dis-
 “ like it.”—“ Explain yourself.”—“ Get
 “ you gone, they must not see us together.”
 What she had foreseen came to pass. The
 judges being assembled, the Connoisseur an-
 nounced this piece as a prodigy, and especially
 in a young poet. The young poet read his
 best,

best, and after Fintac's example, they were in ecstasies at every line, and applauded every scene. At the conclusion they clapped and huzzaed; they discovered in it the delicacy of Aristophanes, the elegance of Plautus, the comick force of Terence, and they knew no piece of Moliere fit to be set in competition with this. After this tryal there was no room to hesitate. The players were not of the same opinion with the wits; for they knew before-hand that these good people had no taste, but there was an order to perform the piece. Agathe, who had assisted at the reading, had applauded it with all her might; there were even pathetick passages at which she appeared to be moved, and her enthusiasm for the work had a little reconciled her with the authour.

"Could it be possible," said Celicour to her, "that you should have thought that good?"

"Excellent," said she, "excellent for us;" and at these words she left him. While the piece was in rehearsal, Fintac ran from house to house to dispose the wits in favour of a young poet of such great expectation. At last the great day arrives, and the Connoisseur assembles his friends to dinner. "Let us go, Gentlemen," said he, "to support your own performance. You have judged the piece admirable, you have warranted the success, and your honour is concerned. As

“ to me, you know how great my weakness is :
 “ I have the bowels of a father for all rising
 “ geniuses, and I feel in as lively a manner
 “ as themselves the uneasinesses they suffer in
 “ those terrible moments.”

After dinner, the good friends of the Connoisseur tenderly embraced Celicour ; and told him that they were going into the pit to be the witnesses rather than instruments of his triumph. They repaired thither ; the piece was played ; it did not go through, and the first mark of impatience was given by these good friends.

Fintac was in the house, trembling and pale as death ; but all the time that the play lasted, this unhappy and tender father made incredible efforts to encourage the spectators to succour his child. In short he saw it expire, and then sinking beneath his grief, dragged himself to his coach, confounded, dejected, and murmuring against heaven for having been born in so barbarous an age. And where was poor Celicour ? Alas, they had granted him the honours of a latticed box, where, sitting on thorns, he had seen what they called his piece, tottering in the first act, stumbling in the second, and tumbling in the third. Fintac had promised to go and take him up, but had forgot it. What was now to become of him ? how escape through that
 multitude

multitude who would not fail to know him again, and to point him out with the finger? At last seeing the front of the house empty, he took courage and descended; but the stove-rooms, the galleries, the stairs were yet full; his consternation made him be taken notice of, and he heard on all sides, "It is he without doubt; yes, there he is; that is he. Poor wretch! It is pity! He will do better another time." He perceived in a corner a groupe of damned authours cracking jests on their companion. He saw also the good friends of Fintac, who triumphed in his fall, and on seeing him turned their backs upon him. Overwhelmed with confusion and grief, he repaired to the true authour's, and his first care was to ask for Agathe: he had entire liberty of seeing her, for her unkle had shut himself up in his closet. "I forewarned you of it: it is fallen, and fallen shamefully," said Celicour throwing him into a chair. "So much the better," said Agathe.—"What, so much the better! when your lover is covered with shame, and makes himself, in order to please you, the talk and ridicule of all Paris? Ah, it is too much. No, Mademoiselle, it is no longer time to jest. I love you more than my life; but in the state of humiliation in which you now see me, I am capable of renouncing both life and yourself. I don't know

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“ know how it has happened that the secret
 “ has not escaped me. It is but little to ex-
 “ pose myself to the contempt of the pub-
 “ lick; your cruel uncle will abandon me! I
 “ know him, he will be the first to blush at see-
 “ ing me again; and what I have done to ob-
 “ tain you, perhaps, cuts off my hope for ever.
 “ Let him prepare, however, to resume his
 “ piece, or to give me your hand. There is
 “ but one way to console me, and to oblige
 “ me to silence. Heaven is my witness, that if
 “ through an impossibility, his work had suc-
 “ ceeded, I should have given to him the honour
 “ of it; it is fallen, and I bear the shame;
 “ but it is an effort of love for which you
 “ alone can be the recompense.” “ It must
 “ be confessed,” said the wicked Agathe, in
 order to irritate him still more, “ that it is
 “ a cruel thing to see one’s self hissed for a-
 “ nother.” — “ Cruel to such a degree that I
 “ would not play such a part for my own
 “ father.” — “ With what an air of con-
 “ tempt they see a wretch pass along whose
 “ play is damned!” — “ The contempt is un-
 “ just, that is one comfort; but insolent
 “ pity, there is the mortification.” — “ I
 “ suppose you were greatly confused in com-
 “ ing down stairs! Did you salute the la-
 “ dies?” — “ I could have wished to anni-
 “ hilate myself.” — “ Poor boy! and how
 “ will

“ will you dare to appear in the world again ?”

—“ I will never appear again, I swear to you,

“ but with the name of your husband, or

“ till after I have retorted on Mr. de Fintac

“ the humiliation of this failure.”—“ You

“ are resolved then to drive him to the wall ?”

—“ Fully resolved, do not doubt it. Let

“ him determine this very evening. If he

“ refuses me your hand, all the news-papers

“ shall publish that he is the authour of the

“ damned piece.” “ And that is what I

“ wanted, said Agathe with triumph; “ there

“ is the object of all those *so much the better*s

“ which put you so much out of patience.

“ Go to my unkle; hold firm, and be assured

“ that we shall be happy.”

“ Well, Sir, and what say you to it ?”

demanded Celicour of the Connoisseur.—

“ I say, my friend, that the publick is a

“ stupid animal, and that we must renounce

“ all labour for it. But console yourself:

“ your work does you honour in the opinion

“ of men of taste.”—“ My work? it is all

“ your’s.—“ Talk lower, I beseech you,

“ my dear lad, talk lower.”—“ It is very easy

“ for you to moderate yourself, Sir, you who

“ have prudently saved yourself from the fall

“ of your piece; but I whom it crushes....”

—“ Ah! do not think that such a fall does

“ you

“you any injury. The more enlightened
 “persons have discerned in this work strokes
 “that proclaim genius.”---“No, Sir, I do
 “not flatter myself; the piece is bad: I have
 “purchased the right of speaking of it with
 “freedom, and all the world are of the same
 “opinion. If it had succeeded, I should have
 “declared that it was your’s; if it had been
 “but partly condemned, I should have taken
 “it upon myself; but so thorough a dam-
 “nation is above my strength, and I beg
 “of you to take the burthen upon yourself.”

—“I, child! I, on my decline, incur this
 “ridicule! To lose in one day a respect
 “which is the work of forty years, and
 “which forms the hope of my old-age!
 “would you have the cruelty to require it?”

—“Have not you the cruelty to render me
 “the victim of my complaisance? You know
 “how much it has cost me.”---“I know all
 “that I owe to you; but, my dear Celicour,
 “you are young, you have time enough to
 “take your revenge, and there needs but
 “one instance of success to make you forget
 “this misfortune: in the name of friendship
 “support it with constancy, I conjure you
 “with tears in my eyes.”---“I consent, Sir,
 “but I perceive too well the consequences of
 “this first essay, to expose myself to the
 “prejudice which it leaves behind it: I re-

“nounce

“ nounce the theatre, poetry, the belles-
 “ lettres.”—“ Well, you are in the right:
 “ for a young man of your age there
 “ are many other objects of ambition.”—
 “ There is but one for me, Sir, and that
 “ depends on you.”---“ Speak, there is no
 “ service which I would not do you: what
 “ do you require?”---“ Your niece’s hand.”
 ---“ Agathe’s hand!”---“ Yes, I adore her,
 “ and it was she, who to please you, made me
 “ consent to every thing that you desired.”---
 “ My niece in the secret?”---“ Yes, Sir.”
 ---“ Ah! her giddiness will perhaps . . . Hola!
 “ somebody: run to my niece, and bid her
 “ come here.”---“ Compose yourself: Agathe
 “ is less a child, less giddy than she appears.”
 ---“ Ah you make me tremble . . . My dear
 “ Agathe, you know what has passed, and the
 “ misfortune which has just happened.”---
 “ Yes, unkle.”---“ Have you revealed this
 “ fatal secret to any one?”---“ To nobody
 “ in the world.”---“ Can I thoroughly de-
 “ pend upon it?”---“ Yes, I swear to you.”
 ---“ Well then, my children, let it die with
 “ us three: I ask it of you as I would ask my
 “ life. Agathe, Celicour loves you; he re-
 “ nounces, out of friendship to me, the
 “ theatre, poetry, letters, and I owe him
 “ your hand as the price of so great a sacri-
 “ fice.” “ He is too well paid,” cried

Celicour seizing Agathe's hand. "I marry
 " an unsuccessful authour!" said she smiling,
 " but I engage to console him for his mis-
 " fortune. The worst of the matter is, that
 " they deny him wit, and so many honest
 " people are contented without it! And now,
 " my dear uncle, while Celicour renounces
 " the glory of being a poet, had not you
 " as well renounce that of being a Con-
 " noisseur? You will be a great deal the
 " easier." Agathe was interrupted by the
 arrival of Clement, the faithful valet of her
 uncle. " Ah, Sir," said he quite out of
 breath, " your friends! your good friends!"
 ---" Well, Clement?" ---" I was in the pit,
 " they were all there." ---" I know it. Did
 " they applaud?" ---" Applaud! the traitors!
 " If you had seen with what fury they mangled
 " this unfortunate young man. I beg, Sir,
 " you would discharge me, if such people are
 " ever to enter your house again." " Ah
 " the rascals! scoundrels!" said Fintac. " Yes,
 " it is done, I will burn my books, and break
 " off all commerce with these men of letters."
 " Keep your books for your amusement," said
 Agathe embracing her uncle; " and with
 " respect to men of letters, wish to have none
 " but your friends, and you will find some
 " worthy of esteem."



THE SCHOOL OF FATHERS.

THE misfortune incident to a father employed in raising a fortune for his children, is not to be able to watch himself over their education, a point of still more consequence than their fortune. The young Timantes, called M. de Volny, had received from nature an agreeable figure, an easy temper, a good heart; but thanks to the cares of the good lady his mother, this happy disposition was soon spoiled, and the most agreeable child in the world at six years old, became a little coxcomb at fifteen. They gave him all the frivolous accomplishments, and not one of the usefull: usefull knowledge might be well enough for a man like his father, who had been obliged to labour to enrich himself; but he who found his fortune made, need only know how to enjoy it nobly. They had laid it down to him as a maxim, that he was never to live with his equals; accordingly he saw none but young people, who being superiour to him in birth, pardoned his being richer than they, provided he payed for their pleasures.

His

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His father would not have had the complaisance to furnish supplies to his liberalities; but his mother did honour to them all. She was not ignorant that at the age of nineteen, he had, according to the genteel custom, a little house and a handsome mistress: one should pass over some things in him: she required only that he should observe a little secrecy, for fear that Timantes, who did not *know the world*, should take it ill that his son amused himself. If in the intervals of his labour the father showed any uneasiness on account of the dissipated life which this young man led, the mother was at hand to justify him, and complaisant falsehoods were never wanting on occasion. Timantes had the pleasure to hear it said, that nobody at the ball had danced like his son. "It is a great comfort," said the good man, "to have given one's self so much trouble for a son who dances well." He did not conceive the necessity of this little signior's having lacqueys so finely dressed, and such a brilliant equipage; but his good lady-wife represented to him, that respect depended on it, and that in order to succeed in the world, one must be on a certain footing. If he asked why his son came home so late, "It was," she told him, "because women of quality do not go

"to

“to bed sooner.” He did not think these reasons very good; but for the sake of peace, he was obliged to be contented with them. However, his son gave a loose to himself in the dissipations of his age, till love seemed to take pity of him, and to undertake his reformation.

His sister Lucy had had, for some little time past, in her convent, a charming companion. Angelica had lost her mother; and being too young to keep house, she had prevailed upon her father to dispense with her, till he should dispose of her hand.

Conformity of age and condition, and, still more, that of tempers, soon united Angelica and Lucy. The latter, on wiping away the tears of her companion, appeared so sensible of her loss, that Angelica no longer observed any reserve in the effusion of her grief. “I have lost,” said she to her, “the best mother that ever lived. Since I have had the use of my reason, I have found in her a friend, and a friend so intimate, that if my heart and her virtues had not continually recalled to my mind the respect which I owed her, her familiarity would have made me forget it. She always disguised her instructions under an air of merriment; and what instructions, my dear Lucy! those of wisdom itself. With
“ what

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“ what strokes was this world, in which I
“ was to live, painted to my astonished eyes!
“ What charms did she give to the pure and
“ modest manners of which she was a living
“ example! Ah, under her enchanting pen-
“ cil all the Virtues became Graces.” Thus
did this amiable daughter, speaking of her
mother, continually mingle with the most
tender regret the most touching eulogies; but
her understanding and her soul praised still more
worthily the person who had formed them.
If any one about her wanted those comforts
which affluence bestows, Angelica deprived
herself of them with joy; the sacrifices cost her
only the trouble of concealing them, and the
want of obliging was the only want she knew.
“ Do you think like me?” said she sometimes
to Lucy. “ Being more happy than our com-
“ panions, that inequality mortifies me, and
“ I blush for Fortune, who has distributed
“ her gifts so ill. If any thing makes the
“ unhappy amends, it is that they are pityed
“ and beloved; whereas to us, whom they
“ might envy, they make it a favour if they
“ do not hate us. We ought therefore to be
“ very attentive to make our companions
“ forget, by beneficence and modesty, this
“ dangerous advantage which we have over
“ them.”

Lucy,

Lucy, charmed with the disposition of Angelica, could have wished to attach herself to her by all the bands of affection. "My dear friend," said she to her one day, "we touch perhaps on the moment when we may be separated for ever: this reflexion is the sole unhappiness of my life; but I have one, if you did but approve of it. . . . I want to show you my brother; he is beautiful as the day, a very picture, and well accomplished." "He is very young," said Angelica, "and very much in the world for his age! I am afraid your mother has been too fond of him."

Volny being come to see Lucy, she prevailed upon her friend to accompany her to the parlour. "Ah, my sister, what charms!" cried the young coxcomb. "Never was so much beauty: what features, what a figure, what eyes! You in a convent, Made-moiselle! It is robbery, treason." "I foresaw," said Lucy, "that you would be transported; and yet her soul is a thousand times more beautiful."---"Sister, she has the look of the Marchioness of Alcine, whom I handed yesterday out of the opera. They cry up the figure of the countess of Flavell, whom I am to sup with this evening; but there is no comparison between her person and this lady's; and though I

" am

“ am the intimate friend of the young Madam
 “ de Blane’s, who passes for the beauty of the
 “ day, I will lay a thousand to one that your
 “ friend will eclipse her when she comes out
 “ into the world.”

While Volny spoke thus, Angelica viewed him with eyes of pity. “ Sir,” said she to him, “ you can have no doubt but your praises
 “ are insults. For, know, that the first senti-
 “ ment that a virtuous woman ought to in-
 “ spire, is the fear of wounding her modesty,
 “ and that it is not permitted to praise without
 “ reserve any but persons without shame.”
 “ There are transports of surprise which we
 “ cannot master,” replied Volny a little con-
 fused.—“ When respect accompanies them,
 “ it prevents them from breaking out. But
 “ I see that I afflict my friend in appearing
 “ offended with your address to me: I will
 “ console her, and put you at your ease. Beau-
 “ tiful or not, I am so little vain of an en-
 “ dowment with which we are often very
 “ contemptible, that I give you leave to say
 “ whatever you please before me; I will not
 “ have the vanity to blush at your praises.”
 “ One must be well accustomed,” said Volny,
 “ to be beautiful, and greatly superiour to
 “ that advantage, to speak of it with so much
 “ negligence. As for me, I cannot persuade
 “ myself that beauty is so contemptible; but
 “ since

“ since you take the homages that are paid it so ill, we must adore it in silence.” From that moment he talked of nothing but himself, his horses, his friends, his suppers, and his intrigues. Lucy, who had her eyes on Angelica, saw with grief that all this prejudiced Volny in her opinion.

“ It is pity,” said Angelica, when he was withdrawn, “ it is a great pity that they have spoiled him so early!” “ Confess, however,” said Lucy, “ that he is made up of graces.” ---“ And of follies, my dear friend.” ---“ He will correct them.” ---“ No, for that absurdity succeeds at his age, and we are never disposed to correct ourselves of a fault which pleases.” ---“ But he has seen you, he will love you; and if he loves you, he will become wise.” ---“ You do not doubt that I wish it; but I am far from hoping it.”

Volny did not doubt that he had made a complete conquest. “ My sister was right,” said he, “ her friend is handsome! a little singular; but her disposition is only the more lively for it. The only thing wanting in her is birth: my mother will have me marry some young woman of quality. Let us visit her however; this girl resembles nothing that we have in the great world, and she has at least sufficient charms to amuse one.”

He

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He went therefore to see his sister again, and with her he again saw Angelica. “What have I done to you,” said he to Lucy, “that you have disturbed my repose? I was so easy! I amused myself so cleverly before I saw your dangerous friend! Ah, Made-moiselle, how insipid is the world, and its amusements how cold to a heart taken up with you! Who would have told me that I should have been jealous of my sister? Mixed with the most brilliant company, solicited by all the pleasures, who could believe it? Yes, I wish to be in her place; she sees you, continually tells you that she loves you, and hears you say that you love her.”---“You have reason to envy my happiness; but, Volny, if you pleased, your’s would still be more deserving of envy.” (At these words Angelica blushed.) —“O heaven! sister! what do I hear?” —“I have said too much.” —“No, my dear Lucy; in virtuous sentiments there is nothing to be concealed. Your sister wishes that heaven may have destined us for each other, and I cannot but be obliged to her. Nay, more: I flatter myself with being born to make a good man happy, and you *might* be such a man as my husband ought to be: you need only resemble your sister.”

—“ If that be all, I am happy ; for they
 “ flatter me that I am very like her.” —“ True,
 “ they flatter you ; but I, who never flatter,
 “ assure you it is no fuch thing. My Lucy
 “ is not vain either of the graces of her un-
 “ derftanding, or her figure.” —“ Ah, I proteft
 “ now that nobody in the world is lefs vain
 “ than I, and if I have merit, I know nothing
 “ of it.” —“ Nothing is more fimple than
 “ Lucy’s manners ; fhe is Nature itfelf in all
 “ her candour. See if in her behaviour, her
 “ language, her gesture, there is any thing
 “ affected, any thing ftudied.” —“ She is
 “ like me: for the fake of avoiding affecta-
 “ tion I often fall into negligence ; I am told
 “ of it every day.” —“ Lucy makes no pre-
 “ tensions to any thing: wholly taken up with
 “ the recommendation of others, herfelf is
 “ the only perfon fhe forgets.” —“ And I,
 “ whatever talents Nature may have given
 “ me, do they fee me vain of them, or pre-
 “ fume upon them? All the world fays,
 “ that I excell in every circumftance of the
 “ agreeable; I alone never mention it. Ah,
 “ if it be modetty and fimplicity which you
 “ love in my fifter, I am very fure that you
 “ will love me: they are my favourite vir-
 “ tues.” “ Would they were!” faid An-
 gelica; “ however, if you have any defign

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“ of ever pleasing me, I advise you to examine yourself more closely.”

“ You have given him,” said Lucy, “ a lesson which he will not forget.”—“ No, for he has forgot it already.” Angelica was in the right. All that he had drawn from their conversation was, that she liked him, and that she would be very glad to be his wife. “ With what frankness,” said he, “ did she make the declaration to me! How well that candour becomes beauty!” Whether vanity or passion, he was really moved by it; but this growing passion, if it was one, had no effect upon his manners. Intoxicated with the incense of his flatterers, agreeably deceived by a young enchantress, he forgot that they sold him the pains which they took to please him, and his vanity caressed by the Pleasures smiled carelessly upon them. This voluptuous softness is the most fatal languor into which a young man can be plunged. Every thing, except that, is painful to him; the lightest duties are fatiguing; decorums the least austere, dull and troublesome; he is not at his ease but in that state of indolence and liberty where every thing obeys him, nothing constrains him.

Sometimes the image of Angelica presented itself to him, like a dream. “ She is charming,” said he; “ but what shall I do with her? Nothing is more inconvenient than

“ than a delicate and faithfull wife to a husband who is not so. My father would expect that I should live only for my wife. There would be love, jealousy, reproaches, tears; horrible! however I will see her again.”

Lucy came alone this time. “ Well, how does she like me?” — “ A great deal too well.” — “ I thought so.” — “ Too well as to figure. That advantage makes you neglect, she says, more amiable qualities, which you would stand in need of without it.” — “ This Angelica of your’s moralises a little, and ’tis pity. Tell her that nothing is more dull, and that so pretty a mouth as her’s is not made to talk reason.” “ It is not she,” said Lucy, “ it is you whom I would correct.” — “ And of what, pray? of loving pleasure, and every thing that inspires it?” — “ Pleasure! is there one more pure than that of possessing the heart of a virtuous and beautifull woman, of loving, and of being loved? I believe that you are affectionate, Angelica has sensibility, every thing that belongs to me is dear to her; but . . .” — “ But she is very difficult, and what is it she requires?” — “ Morals.” — “ Morals at my age! and who has told her that I have none?” — “ I don’t know, but she has conceived a pre-

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“judice against you that grieves me.”—

“Ah! I will bring her to herself again. Bring

“her to me, sister, bring her to me the

“first time I come to see you. It is to no

“purpose that men are discreet,” said he as

he was going away; “women cannot be

“silent; and with whatever care I conceal

“my intrigues, the secret will out. But

“what hurt does that do me? If Angelica

“will have a husband who has always been

“chaste, she has nothing to do but to marry

“a fool or a child. Am I obliged to be faith-

“full to a wife that is to be? Oh! I will

“make her see the folly of her notions.”

She appeared, and he was himself very much

humbled, very much confounded, when he

heard her speak with the eloquence of virtue

and reason on the shame and danger of vice.

“Can you think, Sir,” said she to him, af-

ter having let him treat as slightly as he plea-

sed the principles of good morals; “can you

“think, without blushing, on the union of

“a pure and chaste soul with one tarnished

“and profane by the most unworthy of all in-

“clinations? Of what value in your eyes

“would a heart be, debased by the vices of

“which you are vain? and do think us

“less sensible than yourself to the charms of

“virtue, modesty and innocence? You have

“given yourself a dispensation from those laws

“which

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“ which you have imposed upon us; but
 “ nature and reason are more equitable than
 “ you. For me, I will never believe that a
 “ man can dare to love me while he loves
 “ things that are scandalous, and if he has had
 “ the misfortune to be unworthy of me be-
 “ fore knowing me, it is by the pains he shall
 “ take to wipe away that blemish that I shall
 “ see whether I ought to forget it.” Volny
 wanted to make her understand, that by
 changing condition we changed our con-
 duct; that love, virtue, beauty, had num-
 berless rights over a soul; and that the fri-
 volous and transient pleasures which had
 before occupied that indolent soul, would
 disappear before an object more dear, and
 more worthy to possess it. “ Have you faith,
 “ Sir,” said she, “ in these sudden revolu-
 “ tions? Do you know that they suppose a
 “ soul naturally delicate and noble? that
 “ there are very few of this temper; and that
 “ it is not a good presage of the change which
 “ you promise, to wait, in the very bosom of
 “ vice, the moment of becoming virtuous all
 “ on a sudden?”

Volny, surprised and confounded at this se-
 rious language, contented himself with tell-
 ing her that in all this he flattered himself there
 was nothing personal. “ Pardon me,” said
 Angelica, “ I have heard much talk of you.

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“ I am besides pretty well acquainted with
 “ the way of life of the young men of fa-
 “ shion : you are rich, of very extensive ac-
 “ quaintance, and, unless by a kind of prodi-
 “ gy, you must be more irregular than ano-
 “ ther. But the opinion which I have of you
 “ ought not to discourage you. You think
 “ you love me : I wish it : that perhaps will
 “ give you resolution and force to become a
 “ valuable man. You have a fine example,
 “ a father, who, without all the accomplish-
 “ ments which you are set off with, has ac-
 “ quired, by talents usefull to his country and
 “ himself, the highest reputation. There now
 “ is what I call an uncommon man ; and
 “ when you shall become worthy of him, I
 “ shall be proud of being worthy of you.”

This discourse had thrown Volny into se-
 rious reflexions ; but his friends came to draw
 him out of them. He was expected at a deli-
 cious supper, at which Fatime, Doris, and
 Cloe were to assist. Their merriment was live-
 ly and brilliant, and if Volny's heart did not
 give itself up to it, at least his senses did.

We may easily judge that in this polite
 circle, a serious engagement passed for the
 highest extravagance. “ When a person's
 “ fortune is concerned,” said they, “ it is time
 “ enough, we resolve on it ; but can a young
 “ man, born to a great fortune, can such a
 “ one

“ one be fool enough, or mad enough, to forge
 “ himself a chain? If he does not love his
 “ wife, she is a burthen which he wantonly
 “ imposes upon himself; and if he loves her,
 “ what a sad method of pleasing himself is that
 “ of being her husband! Is there in all the
 “ world a more ridiculous creature than a
 “ loving husband? Suppose also that this
 “ should succeed, what then? They are plea-
 “ sed for six months, to be dull all their lives.
 “ Ah! my dear Volny, no marriage: you
 “ would be a lost man. If you have a fancy
 “ for any honest girl, wait till another marries
 “ her; they always come round to us sooner or
 “ later, and you will be happy in your turn.”
 Would one believe that this unthinking young
 man thought these reflexions very wise? “ And
 “ yet only see,” said he, “ what empire vir-
 “ tue and beauty have over a soul, since they
 “ make it forget the care of its repose, and
 “ the value of its liberty.”

He would fain not have seen Angelica again;
 but he was not well with himself, when he had
 passed a few days without seeing her. Such
 nevertheless is the attraction of libertinism,
 that on quitting that adorable young lady, pe-
 netrated, ravished, enchanted with her wisdom
 and her charms, he plunged himself again into
 the dissipations, of which she had made him
 ashamed.

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Is it possible, that it can be a happiness to a son to lose his mother? Volny, at the death of his, thought he saw the source of all his foolish expenses dried up; but it did not even come into his head to renounce those things which had engaged him in them, and the only care with which he was taken up, was to supply the means which he had lost to support them. Being the only son of so rich a father, he could not fail to be rich in his turn; and a young man finds at Paris a pernicious facility of anticipating his fortune. Timantes, now on his decline, wanted to repose himself from his long fatigues, and to engage his son to take his place. “Sir,” said the young man to him, “I do not think myself born for that.” — “Well, my son, would you rather take the profession of arms?” — “My inclination is not that way, and my birth does not oblige me to it.” — “The law, without doubt, pleases you better?” — “Oh! not at all, I have an invincible aversion for the law.” — “What will you be then?” — “My mother had views of an office which confers nobility, which requires no duty, and might be discharged at Paris.” — “I understand you, my son; I will think of it; an excellent vocation! Oh I see,” said the good man in himself, “that you would live an idle life; but I will hinder you
“ if

“ if I can. An office which confers nobility,
 “ and requires no duty ! very convenient.
 “ And why should I still wear myself out with
 “ labour and inquietude ? Let me repose ;
 “ let me have no other care than that which I
 “ have taken up rather too late, the care of
 “ observing the conduct of a son who pro-
 “ mises me nothing but sorrow ; for he who
 “ loves idleness, loves the vices of which idle-
 “ ness is the mother.”

But what was the affliction of Timantes
 when he learnt that his son, intoxicated with
 pride, and plunged in libertinism, gave into
 all kinds of irregularities ; that he had mistresses
 and flatterers ; that he gave shows and enter-
 tainments, and that he played at a rate suffi-
 cient to ruin him ? “ It is my fault,” said Ti-
 mantes, “ and I must repair it ; but how ? The
 “ habit is contracted : the relish for vice has
 “ made great progress. Shall I constrain this
 “ young man ? he will escape me. Shall I
 “ disavow his expenses and debts ? that would
 “ be dishonouring myself, it would be extin-
 “ guishing in his abased soul the very seeds of
 “ honesty. To shut him up is still worse :
 “ thank heaven, he is not come to that pass as
 “ to merit that the laws should deprive him of
 “ the natural right of freedom, and there
 “ are none but unnatural parents who would
 “ be severer towards their children than the

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“ laws. In the mean time he is running on
 “ to his ruin ; what shall I do to draw him
 “ from the precipice on which I see him ? Let us
 “ go back to the source of the evil. My riches
 “ have turned his head ; born of a father
 “ without fortune, he had been like another,
 “ modest, laborious, and prudent ; the reme-
 “ dy is easy, and my course is taken.”

Timantes began from that time to settle his wealth in such a manner as that it should be detached, independent and free. Excepting his estate of Volny, and his town-house, his fortune was all in his porte-folio, and he took care to adjust matters with all his correspondents. Things being thus disposed, he returns home one day in consternation. His son and his friends, who waited his coming to seat themselves at table, were struck with his dejection. One of them could not refrain from asking him the cause : “ You shall know it,” said he ; “ let us make a little haste, if you
 “ please, to dine ; I am taken up with serious
 “ affairs.” They dined in profound silence, and Timantes at their getting up from table, having taken leave of his guests, shut himself up with his son. “ Volny,” said he to him, “ I
 “ have bad news to tell you, but you must sup-
 “ port your misfortune with courage. My child,
 “ I am ruined. Two-thirds of my fortune are
 “ just taken on board two vessels, and the dis-
 “ honesty

“ honesty of a person whom I trusted has de-
 “ prived me of half the rest. The desire of
 “ leaving you a large fortune has undone me;
 “ happily I owe but little, and out of the re-
 “ mains of my fortune I shall save my estate of
 “ Volny, which is worth twenty thousand
 “ livres a year : on that we shall be able to live.
 “ It is a terrible blow, but you are young, and
 “ you may rise under it. I have not rendered
 “ myself unworthy the confidence of my corre-
 “ spondents ; my name will perhaps still re-
 “ tain some credit in Europe ; but I am too
 “ old to begin anew ; and you must repair the
 “ misfortunes of your father. I set out in
 “ greater difficulties than you will do, and
 “ with probity, labour, and my instructions,
 “ it is easy for you to go farther than I have
 “ done.”

The situation of a traveller at whose feet the
 thunder has just fallen, is not to be compared
 to that of Volny. “ What, my father, ruined
 “ without resource !”—“ You, my son, are
 “ the only resource left me, and I have no
 “ longer any hope but in you. Go, consult
 “ yourself, and leave me to take the measures
 “ suitable to our misfortune.”

The news was soon made publick. The
 house at Paris was let ; the equipages sold ; a
 plain coach ; a decent lodging ; a frugal table,
 a family of servants suitable to the necessities
 of

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of a prudent way of living; every thing proclaimed this reverse of fortune, and it is unnecessary to say that the number of Timantes his friends diminished considerably.

Those of Volny were touched with his accident. "What is the matter?" said one: "they tell me your father is ruined!"—"It is too true."—"What a folly! You have your little box then no longer?"—"Alas, no."—"I am very sorry for it, I reckoned to have gone there to supper to-morrow." Another accosted him, and said, "Tell me a little how this is; your fortune is entirely ruined?"—"It is at least reduced to a very small matter."—"You have a very silly father of your own! Why the devil did he meddle? You would have been ruined yourself well enough without him." "I am quite distracted," said a third; "they tell me that you have sold your fine horses?"—"Alas, yes."—"If I had known it, I would have bought them. What a fellow you are! you never think of your friends."—"I was taken up with more serious affairs."—"With your little mistress, was not it? You will have her no longer on your own account; but you will always be good friends: take comfort, I know she loves you, she will behave well."

Some

Some of them said to him as they went along, "Adieu, Volny;" and all the rest shunned him.

As to his mistress, whom he had enriched, she was so afflicted that she had not the courage to see him again. "Spare me," writ she to him: "you know my sensibility; the sight of you would make too grievous an impression on me. I find myself unable to support it." It was then, his soul pierced both by the cold flights of his friends, and the unworthy desertion of his mistress, that Volny for the first time saw the veil fall which he had over his eyes. "Where have I been?" said he: "what have I done? how was I going to spend my life? Ah, what reproaches have I not merited; what wrongs have I not to repair? Let me go and see my sister," added he, for he had not the courage to say, "Let me go and see Angelica."

Lucy was overwhelmed with the news which her father had just told her. "It is not for myself," said she, "I am content; and to be happy far from the world, but little is necessary; but you, my father, but Volny!" — "What would you have, daughter? I was not born in the opulence wherein I have seen myself. If my son is prudent, he will still have riches enough; if not, he will have too much." Lucy's grief redoubled on seeing her brother.

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“ I have not the courage to console you,” said she, “ but I go to call to my assistance our wise and affectionate Angelica.”—“ Oh no, sister, I have not deserved her interesting herself in my sorrow; when I might have done her honour by sacrifices, it was then that I should have rendered myself worthy of her esteem and pity: now that every one abandons me, my return, though humiliating to me, has nothing flattering in it for her.” While he was speaking thus, Angelica came of her own accord, and with the most touching air testified to him all her sensibility for his loss. “ It is a great misfortune for your father,” added she, “ it is so too for this dear girl, but it is perhaps a happiness for you. It would be cruel to afflict you by reproaches, when we owe you consolations; but you may draw from the loss of your wealth blessings more valuable than that wealth itself.”—“ I abused it, heaven punishes me for it, but punishes me too cruelly in depriving me of the hope of being her’s whom I love. I was young; and I dare believe that without this desperate lesson, time, love, and reason, would have rendered me less unworthy of you.”—“ I see you dejected,” said she to him; “ it is no longer from presumption, it is from despondency that we must preserve you, and
“ what

“ what it would have been dangerous to con-
 “ fess to you in prosperity, you stand in need
 “ of knowing in adversity. Whether it was
 “ not possible for me to think ill of the brother
 “ of my friend, or whether it was that you
 “ yourself had inspired me with that prepossession
 “ which does not listen to reason, I
 “ thought I discerned in you, amidst all the
 “ errors and vices of your age, a disposition
 “ at bottom naturally good. Happily your
 “ past errors have nothing shameful in the
 “ eyes of the world: the path of honour and
 “ virtue is open to you, and it is more easy
 “ for you than ever to become such as I wish.
 “ As to fortune, the reverse which you have
 “ experienced is overwhelming; I shall not
 “ make you a panegyrick upon mediocrity:
 “ when we have known ourselves rich, it is
 “ humiliating, it is hard to cease to be so;
 “ but the evil is not without remedy. Con-
 “ form yourself to your present situation;
 “ emerge out of that indolent softness in which
 “ you have been plunged; let the love of la-
 “ bour take place of the taste for dissipation;
 “ do all that depends on yourself, if you love
 “ me, in order to re-establish between us that
 “ equality of fortune required in marriage.
 “ My father, who loves me, and who would
 “ not have me unhappy, will allow me, I
 “ hope, the liberty of waiting for you. If in
 “ six

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“ six years your fortune is re-established, or on
 “ the point of being re-established, all the
 “ obstacles will be smoothed; if with pru-
 “ dence, frugality and labour, you have the
 “ misfortune not to succeed, I require then of
 “ you, in the room of all riches, only to have
 “ consideration of your condition; I am an
 “ only daughter, very rich myself; I will
 “ cast myself at my father’s feet, and obtain
 “ his permission to indemnify a valuable man
 “ for the injustice of fortune.” Lucy could
 no longer refrain from embracing Angelica:
 “ Ah, how justly art thou named!” said she to
 her. “ There is nothing but a heavenly spirit
 “ that could be capable of so much virtue.”
 Volny on his side, in the tenderness and re-
 spect with which he was seized, applied his
 mouth, as he threw himself down, on the bar
 of the grate which Angelica’s hand had touch-
 ed. “ Mademoiselle,” said he to her, “ you
 “ render my misfortune dear to me, and I
 “ am going to employ my whole life to merit,
 “ if it be possible, the favours with which you
 “ overwhelm me. Permit me to come often
 “ to derive from you the courage, the prudence,
 “ and the virtue which I have need of in order
 “ to deserve you.”

He retired not such as heretofore, vain, and
 full of himself, but humbled, confounded at
 having so little known the value of the most
 noble

noble heart that heaven had ever formed. He enters his father's closet. "Your fortune is changed," said he, "but your son is still more so; and I hope that one day you will bless heaven for the reverse which restores me to my duty, and to myself. Condescend to instruct and to direct me: diligent, laborious, and docile, I am going to be the support and consolation of your old-age, and you may dispose of me." The good man transported dissembled his joy, and contented himself with commending such good dispositions. He presented his son to his correspondents, and demanded in his behalf their friendship and confidence. We pity above all unfortunate persons whom we esteem, and each of them touched with the misfortune of this gallant man, made it a point to console him.

Volny, who resumed the name of Timantes, had but few difficulties to encounter in his first operations: his dexterity, which at first was purely his father's, but which soon after became actually his own, made his credit visibly increase. The moments of relaxation which his father obliged him to take, he passed with Angelica, and he felt a sensible pleasure in telling her his progress. Angelica, who attributed partly to herself the wonderfull change in her lover, enjoyed her own influence with the

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the double satisfaction of love and friendship. Lucy was in adoration of her, and ceased not to give her thanks for the happiness which she had procured them.

One day that her father came to see her, and testified his satisfaction at the consolation which his son gave him, "Do you know," said Lucy, "to whom we are indebted for this reformation? to the most beautiful, and most virtuous person breathing, to the only daughter of Alcimon, my companion and friend." She then related to him all that had passed. "You melt me," said the good man, "I must know this charming girl." Angelica came, and received the commendations of Timantes with a modesty which still heightened her beauty. "Sir," said she to him, "I depend on a father; but it is true, that if he has the goodness to allow me to dispose of myself, and that you are satisfied with your son, I shall take a pride in becoming your daughter. My friendship for Lucy inspired me with the first desire of it, my respect for yourself still adds to it, your very misfortunes have only made me interest myself more in every thing that could make you amends for them, and if the conduct of your son is such as you wish and as I desire, whether he be rich or not, the most honourable and

" the

“ the most agreeable use I can make of my fortune, is to share it with him.” At this discourse the old man was very near letting his secret escape him; but he had the prudence to contain himself. “ I did not think, Madam,” said he, “ that it was possible to increase, in the soul of a father, the desire of seeing his son a wise and virtuous man; but you add a new interest to that of paternal love; I don’t know what heaven will do with us, but in all the situations of life, and till my last breath, be assured of my gratitude.”

“ That you should not have confided to me,” said he on seeing his son again, “ the follies of your youth, I am but little surpris’d, and I pardon you for it; but why conceal from me a virtuous inclination? why not confess to your father your love for Angelica, the daughter of my old friend?” “ Alas,” said the young man, “ have you not misfortunes enough of your own without afflicting you with my sorrows? and who has revealed my secret to you?” — “ Your sister, Angelica herself; I am charmed with her, I am in love with her, and I wish she was my daughter.” — “ Ah, I wish so too! but how superior is her fortune to mine!” — “ In time you may come near it. Visit this lovely girl often.” — “ I visit only her, and I
“ have

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“ have no other ambition in the world, than to
“ be worthy of her and of you.”

Timantes felt an inexpressible satisfaction at seeing daily the success of the trial which he had put him to. He had the firmness to let him apply himself for five whole years, without relaxation, to the re-establishing of his fortune, detached from the world, and dividing his life between his counting-house and Angelica's parlour. At length seeing his reformation become habit, and all the old seeds of vice extirpated, he went to visit Alcimon. “ My
“ old friend,” said he, “ you have, they
“ tell me, a charming daughter; I come
“ to propose for her an agreeable partner in
“ point of condition, and advantageous in
“ point of fortune.” “ I am obliged to you,”
said Alcimon, “ but I tell you beforehand
“ that I would have a person of the same con-
“ dition with myself, and who would take
“ a pride in calling me his father; I have
“ not laboured all my life to give my daughter
“ a husband, who may be ashamed of me.”
“ The person I propose,” said Timantes, “ is
“ precisely such a one as you like. He is
“ rich, he is honest, he will always respect you.”
—“ What is he?”—“ I cannot tell you but
“ at my own house, where I invite you to
“ come and renew, over a bottle, a friendship
“ of forty years. Do me the favour to bring
“ Ange-

“ Angelica there. My daughter, who is her
 “ companion in the convent, shall have the
 “ honour of accompanying her; you shall
 “ both of you see the young man who de-
 “ mands her, and to put you more at your
 “ ease, he shall not know himself that I
 “ have spoke to you about him.” The day
 appointed, Alcimon and Timantes go and
 fetch Angelica and Lucy; they arrive, they
 prepare to sit down at table, they send word
 to the son, who, busied in his office, ex-
 pected nothing less than the happiness which
 was preparing for him. He enters, what is
 his surprise! Angelica there! Angelica with
 her father! What was he to think, what to
 hope from this unforeseen rendezvous? Why
 had they made a secret of it to him? Every
 thing seems to proclaim his happiness to him,
 but his happiness is not probable. In this
 confusion of thoughts he lost the use of his
 senses. A sudden giddiness spread a cloud
 over his eyes; he wanted to speak, his voice
 failed him, and a low bow alone expressed to
 the father and the daughter how much he
 was moved with the honour his father and
 he received. His sister, who came to throw
 herself into his arms, gave him time to
 recover from his confusion. Never was em-
 brace so tender. He thought he held in his
 bosom

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bosom Angelica with Lucy, and he could not separate himself from her.

At table, Timantes displayed an alacrity at which all the company were surprised. Alcimon prepossessed with the demand which he had made him, and impatient to see the young man whom he proposed arrive, freely gave himself up to the pleasure of finding himself again with his old friend; he had even the kindness to enter into conversation with the young Timantes. “I see,” said he to him, “that you are the comfort of your father. People talk of your application to business and your talents with great commendations, and such is the advantage of your condition, that a sensible and honest man cannot fail of success.”—“Ah, my friend,” replied the old Timantes! “it requires a great deal of time to make one’s fortune, and very little to ruin it! What a pity not to have mine to offer you! Instead of proposing to you a stranger as husband to this amiable young lady, I should have solicited that happiness for my son.” “I should have preferred him to every body else,” said Alcimon.—“Indeed!”—“Ay, indeed. But you know where one is liable to have a numerous family, there should be wherewithal to support it.”—“If it depends only on that,” said Timantes, “the case is not desperate, and

“we

“ we may come to an agreement.” On saying
 these words he rose from table, and returning the
 moment after, “ There,” said he, “ see, there
 “ is my porte-folio: it is yet pretty well fur-
 “ nished;” and observing Alcimon’s surprise,
 “ know,” added he, “ that my ruin is all a
 “ fiction. This young man had been spoiled
 “ by the notion that he was born rich: I knew
 “ no better method to reform him than to make
 “ him believe that I was ruined. This feint
 “ has succeeded: he is now in a good way;
 “ I am even certain that he has no desire to
 “ relapse again into the errors of his youth,
 “ and it is time to trust to him. Yes, my
 “ son, I have all the wealth I had, augmented
 “ by five years savings and the fruit of your
 “ labour. It is for him, therefore,” said he
 to his friend, “ that I demand Angelica,
 “ and if there be occasion for any new
 “ motive to engage you to grant her to me,
 “ I will confess to you that he has seen her
 “ at the convent, that he has conceived for
 “ her the most tender love, and that this love
 “ has done more than ill fortune itself towards
 “ attaching him to his duties.” While Ti-
 mantes did but sound the disposition of Ange-
 lica’s father, she herself, her friend, and her
 lover, had felt only the emotion and anxiety
 of hope and fear; but at sight of the porte-
 folio, at the news that Timantes his ruin
 was

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was but a feint, at the demand which he made himself of Angelica's hand for his son, Lucy all wild and beside herself flew into the arms of her father; the young Timantes still more confused fell at Alcimon's knees; and Angelica, her countenance overspread with paleness, had not the power to lift up her eyes. Alcimon raised the young man with his embraces, and turning towards the old Timantes, "My friend," said he to him, "when we would contrive an agreeable surprise, we must take instruction from you. Come, you are a good father; and your son deserves to be happy."

End of the SECOND VOLUME.



